d20 system

A COMPLETE d20 GAME IN EVERY ISSUE!

JAN 2002

Polyhedron

DEFINITIVE d20

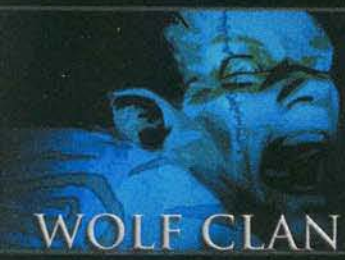
PULP HEROES d20 Mini-Game

New Classes
New Skills
New Feats

Plus:
ORIGINS,
WEIRD TECH,
and more!

A publication of Dungeon Magazine

EVERY WARRIOR HAS A NAME



WOLF CLAN

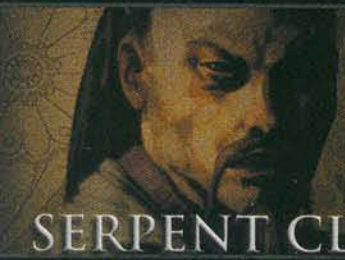
· UNIT ALCHEMY

The mark of a great warrior is fusion of body and mind. This takes rigorous and focused training. The unit alchemy system allows the warriors to grow, so even a common peasant can be elevated to a powerful samurai warrior.

DRAGON CLAN

· LIVING RTS REALM

Battlefields come alive with weather and wildlife. Combat will change as the elements shift. Use these resources from the land to survive.



SERPENT CLAN

· GROWTH ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Battles can be won but the war rages on. Noble acts during combat earn you Zen points for warriors to improve their weapons and magic. This will make you and your forces stronger the next time you meet the enemy.

LOTUS CLAN

· UNIQUE CHARACTERS

Build an army one warrior at a time. Choose them wisely and manage each unit carefully. Train and develop every unique member of your battle forces, for they are the life-blood and protectors of your clan.

13 major awards and nominations including *"Best PC strategy game of E3."* - IGN.COM

©2001 Crave Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Battle Engine ©2001 Liquid Entertainment, LLC. All rights reserved. Developed by Liquid Entertainment, LLC Co-published by Ubi Soft Entertainment S.A. and Crave Entertainment, Inc. under license by Crave Entertainment, Inc. Battle Realms, Crave Entertainment, and the Crave Entertainment logo are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Crave Entertainment, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries. Liquid Entertainment, LLC. and the Liquid Entertainment logo are registered trademarks of Liquid Entertainment, LLC. All other copyrights and trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

.AND THEY ALL ANSWER TO YOU.

• THE STRATEGY IS ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

• BEAUTIFUL & STUNNING ENVIRONMENTS.

• UP TO 50 DIFFERENT UNIT TYPES.

BATTLE REALMS™

LIQUID ENTERTAINMENT

BATTLEREALMS.COM

CRAVE ENTERTAINMENT

Ubi Soft
www.ubisoft.com

RP RATING PENDING CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

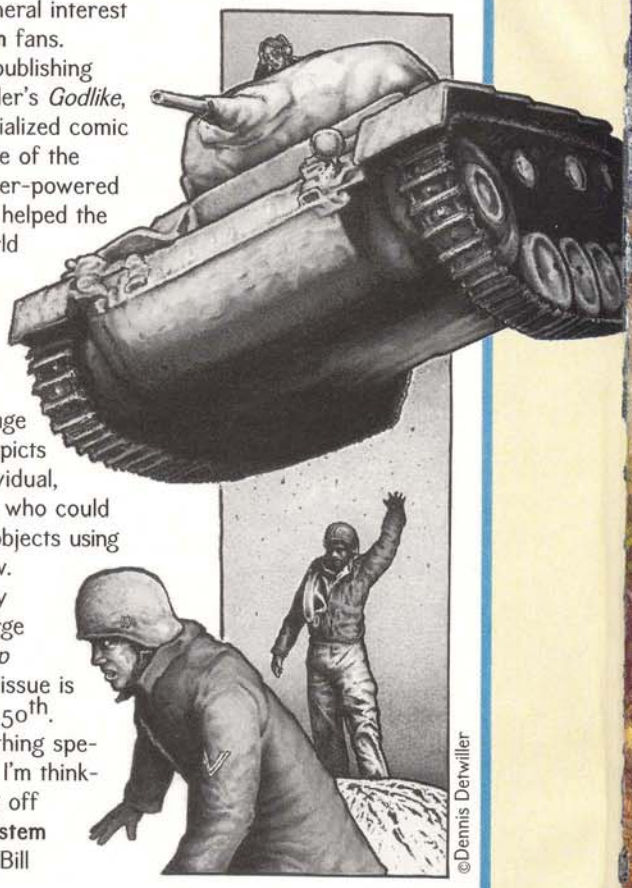
First Watch

Previews, notes & news on the world of d20 gaming

While putting together the *Pulp Heroes* material that makes up most of this issue of *Polyhedron*, I had a chance to plumb Wizards of the Coast's extensive *Amazing Stories* archives. Held in two well-locked closet-sized metal cabinets, the archives contain pulp magazines published from the late 20s to the modern day. Stories that gave birth to our hobby can be found in those cabinets, attached to names like Howard, Lovecraft, Burroughs, Wells, Verne, Vance, and more.

There's something magical about the magazine format, perhaps more so in the bygone era of Hugo Gernsback than today. Without the distractions of television or the Internet, the reader of the so-called Pulp Era had fewer mass-media images of the future to get between the printed page and the reader's imagination. Sure, there were the ever present radio dramas and the occasional visit to the cinema, but the pulps offered monthly doses of un-reality to readers who, for more than three decades, kept coming back for more. I can't help but wonder what the "scientific fiction" fan of 1931 would think of the concept of roleplaying games. Something tells me David Noonan's *Pulp Heroes* mini-game would be right at home tucked between a tale of Doc Savage and some spicy gangland romance.

While certain elements of pulp fiction leave a lot to be desired (the cheap paper, for starters, which literally falls apart in your hands these days), I can't help but be envious of their incredibly generous page count. When we set out to port the venerable *Polyhedron* to the new *Dungeon Adventures* format, everyone agreed that it would be cool to include a complete d20 mini-game or campaign setting in every issue. A few months and one absolutely brilliant game later, I've got a magazine that's so full of pulpy goodness there's not a lot of room for anything else. The sheer girth of *Pulp Heroes* makes this something of an oddity for the new *Polyhedron*. Future issues will include a (somewhat shorter) d20 game or setting as well as updates on the d20 industry at large, more thorough coverage of the RPGA Network (there's a ton of news on this front—tune in next issue for a full update), and articles of general interest to **d20 System** fans. We'll also be publishing Dennis Detwiller's *Godlike*, a 24-page serialized comic featuring some of the important super-powered "Talents" that helped the Allies win World War II in the background to the **d20 System** game of the same name. The image to the right depicts one such individual, the Pole Cien, who could move heavy objects using only his shadow. For now, enjoy your extra-large helping of *Pulp Heroes*. Next issue is *Polyhedron's* 150th. Let's do something special, shall we? I'm thinking of starting off with a **d20 System** mini-game by Bill Slavicsek called *Shadowchasers*, which will be your first glimpse at an absolutely HUGE project we're calling "d20 Modern." What's that, you ask? Be here in 60 days, and we'll show you. —Erik Mona



©Dennis Detwiller

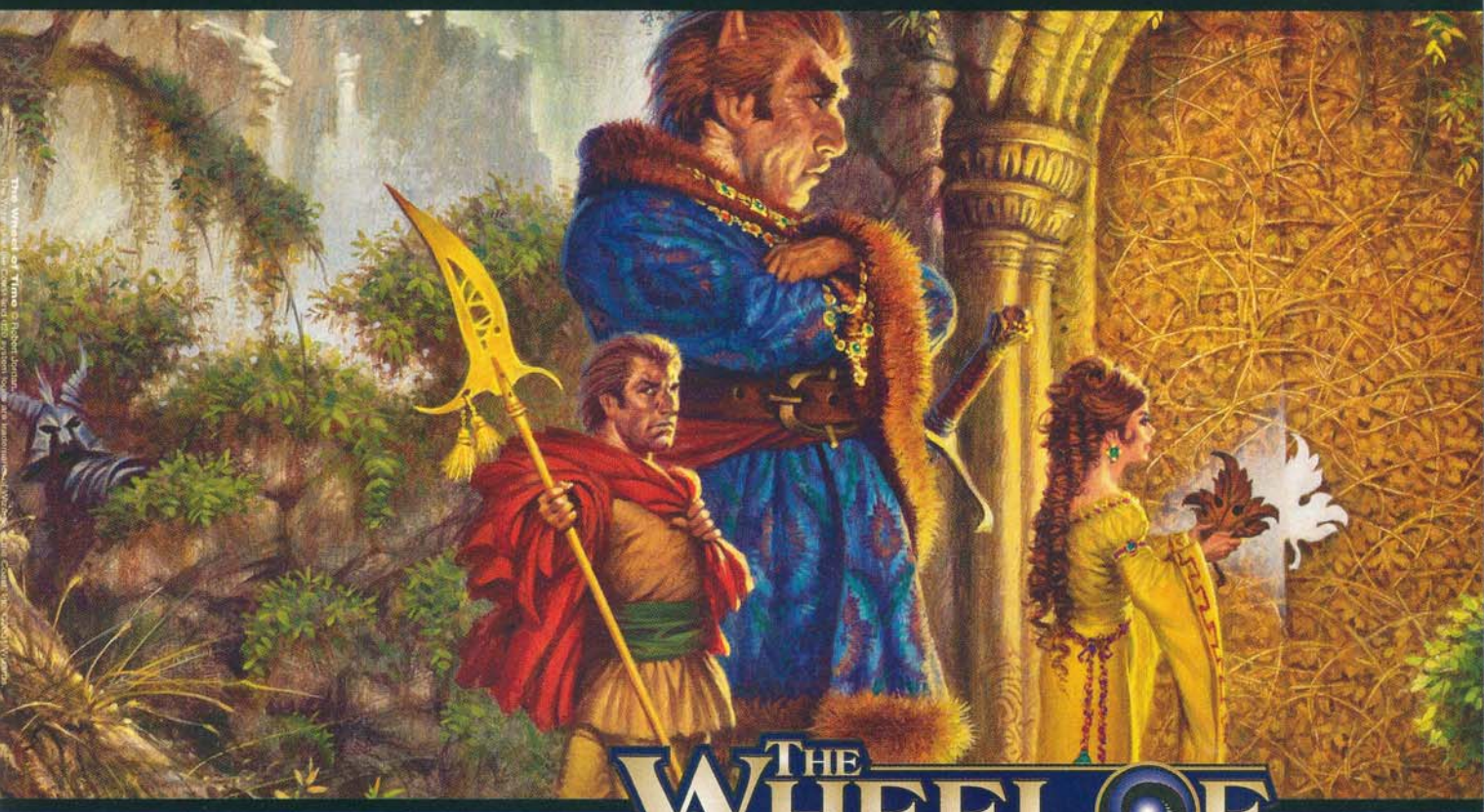
Bolt and Quiver by Stan!

CAN YOU FEEL IT, QUIVER? ADVENTURE IS IN THE AIR! FAME AND FORTUNE WILL BE OURS!
:SNORT: I HOPE SO! YOU SPENT ALMOST ALL OUR GOLD LAST NIGHT!
MAYHAP YON TAVERN HOLDS THE ANSWER TO OUR MONETARY WOES.
A BAR?!? WE'RE BROKE AND YOU WANT TO SPEND THE DAY IN A BAR?!
NATURALLY! ALL GRAND ADVENTURES START AT AN INN. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT....
Stan!
...EVERYONE!
QUIT SHOVIN'!
YE OLDE DARK CORNER
YOU CALL THIS A RESUMÉ?
©2001 STAN! WWW.BOLTANDQUIVER.COM

Weave yourself into the Great Pattern

As the Third Age comes to pass, the tales of many heroes will be told. And now it's your turn to take part in those stories. Covering the entire Wheel of Time™ series to date, this 320-page volume contains statistics for all the major characters and a unique system for channeling the One Power, as well as new prestige classes, feats, skills, and everything else you'll need to make your visions become reality in Robert Jordan's world of epic fantasy. So pick up your copy of ***The Wheel of Time Roleplaying Game*** at your favorite book, game, or hobby store.

And take your place in the legends that have yet to be told.



THE WHEEL OF TIME™
Roleplaying Game

www.wizards.com/wheeloftime

d20 system™

Wizards of the Coast®

Cthulhu is Coming

March sees the release of the brand new **d20 System** conversion of the venerable *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game. Clocking in at 320 pages, the $39.95 hardcover was written by Monte Cook and John Tynes. We know you're all madly clutching your well-read *Necronomicons* in preparation for the big day, so we thought we'd treat you with a selection from the book to tide you over for the next short months.

NIGHTGAUNT
Large Outsider (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (22 hp)
Initiative: +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative)
Speed: 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)
AC: 14 (+2 natural, -1 size, +3 Dex)
Attacks: Clutch +7 melee
Damage: Typically none (see below)
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Clutch, tickle, dive, fear aura, slow motion
Special Qualities: Blindsight, damage reduction 15/+2, darkvision, immunities, resist acid (20), resist cold (20), resist electricity (20), resist fire (20).
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 18
Skills: Hide +10, Intuit Direction +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +13, Open Lock (using its tail) +11, Spot +11, Tumble +7
Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility
Climate: Any
Advancement: 5-12 HD (Huge), 13-24 HD (Gargantuan), 25+ HD (Colossal)
CR: 4
Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Few creatures fit the traditional description of devils better than the nightgaunt. In fact, it is quite possible that the medieval image derives from actual encounters with these beings. Fearfully lean yet surprisingly strong humanoids of roughly human size and shape, they are completely featureless: eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hair, and genitalia are all absent. A smooth, sleek, obsidian-hued skin covers all, even their great bat-like wings. A nightgaunt's hands and feet are notable for the absence of any opposable digits. All three "fingers" or "toes" are of equal length, roughly triple the length of a human's index finger, and able to wrap around objects they grasp with firm but unpleasantly boneless tenacity. A wickedly barbed prehensile tail completes the picture.

COMBAT
Nightgaunts are usually careful not to hurt their prey. The spot where it strands its unwilling passenger may be perilous, but he or she is generally unhurt upon arrival. Thus, the belief has grown up among those wise in Mythos matters that they are essentially harmless. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Clutch (Ex): A nightgaunt's chief attack is to swoop down upon a target, seize him in its clutches, and fly away with him. This attack inflicts no damage, but if the nightgaunt succeeds in an opposed grapple check (a free action), its foe is pinned. While a night-gaunt prefers to deliver its captive undamaged, recalcitrant passengers may find its grasp slowly tightening, inflicting an automatic 1d4 points of subdual damage each round.

Tickle (Ex): Once they have their prey immobile in their clutches, nightgaunts use their evilly barbed tails to unpleasantly caress, stroke, grope, and tickle them. While this sounds harmless, in fact it is a subtle form of torture that inflicts great distress but no actual damage (and hence can be continued endlessly). A character who fails her Will save (DC 15, +1/round) is helpless, unable to take any action that round other than squirm helplessly in its inexorable grasp.

Dive (Ex): If a nightgaunt is unable to subdue a foe it is carrying, it may opt to simply drop him, in which case normal falling damage applies (1d6 points for every 10 feet fallen, up to a maximum of 20d6). A nightgaunt can also choose to fly up high and then dive at full speed (60x5, or 300 ft/rd), releasing the character suddenly at the low point of the dive. The nightgaunt swoops back up to safety, while its erstwhile passenger plows into the ground, receiving 1d6 damage for every 10 feet of the dive. Note that the fall need not be vertical: a nightgaunt can fly straight toward a cliff face or mountainside with much the same effect. In addition to any damage suffered, characters with acrophobia or agoraphobia suffer 1d3 points of San loss simply from the flight. Acrophobiacs subjected to a sudden dive must make another San check or lose 1d10 additional points.

Fear Aura (Su): Anyone within 30 feet of a nightgaunt must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be struck with terror for 3 rounds. The victim has an equal chance of either freezing in place (can take no actions, loses all Dex bonuses to AC, foe gains +2 to attack rolls) or fleeing in panic (-2 penalty to all saving throws, 50% chance to drop whatever he's holding).

Slow Motion (Su): Once every 10 rounds, the nightgaunt can force a chosen target within 60 ft. of it into slow motion (Will save, DC 16, to resist). From the character's point of view, it seems as if everything is happening in slow motion, like in a nightmare. The affected character suffers a -2 penalty to her AC, melee attack rolls, melee damage rolls, and Reflex saves. In addition, she may only take one standard action each round while the effect lasts. Nightgaunts use this power to hinder a chosen target's escape.

Legends of Terris

Adventure with thousands

Take control of your destiny

Build your own legend

'the best interactive thinking experience on the net'

- *10 million game hours played*
- *Over 150,000 player characters created*
- *Logon, download, & login*

WWW.LEGENDSOFTERRIS.COM

Run on servers: Powered by imagination

- Huge world expansion just released
- New FREE download software with enhanced graphics and sound

Release Roundup

Fans of the d20 System should look out for the following products in January or February.

Alderac Entertainment Group (AEG)
Feel like killing lots and lots and lots of bad guys? Tired of piss-poor body-counts from a single dungeon? Why not go to *War*? The latest of AEG's single-word-title sourcebooks, *War*, hits in February. 128 pages of mass combat, including new prestige classes and notes on how spells can change the tide of battle.

Atlas
Looking for a short encounter to spice up your campaign? Atlas Games's Penumbra imprint delivers with *Backdrops*, a 32-page collection of locations complete with maps and details on related personalities ($8.95).

Avalanche Press
Avalanche Press continues its unholy mix of hard-core historical adventures and soft-core pornographic covers with *Black Flag, Pirates of the Caribbean*, a sourcebook for pirates of the 17th and 18th Centuries. Shake your booty while stealing booty, matey.

Bastion Press
Former FORGOTTEN REALMS® brand manager Jim Butler's new publishing outfit offers two new 96-page "d20 Guides." *Arms & Armor*, by Michael Dussault, presents tons of new equipment to help characters hack their way to victory, and *Villains*, by James Jacobs, provides a wide range of NPCs, from flunkies to criminal masterminds.

Eden Studios
Secrets of the Ancients, a 32-page collection of adventure vignettes by CJ Carella, gives players a glimpse at the remains of two decadent civilizations and plenty of chances to get killed. All that and a new prestige class, the Seeker of Secrets, for $8.95.

If monsters are more your bag, you'll want to check out *Liber Bestiarius*, a 192-page stunningly illustrated hardcover creature collection by Matt Colville ($25.00).

Fantasy Flight Games
Fantasy and high technology meet in one of the most eagerly anticipated releases of the year: *Dragonstar*. Two hardcover volumes make up the game—the *Starfarer's Handbook* provides everything you need to get started, and the *Galaxy Guide* presents a backdrop for all the action. Both books retail for $27.95 and feature design by Matt Forbeck and Greg Benage.

Fiery Dragon Productions
The first two months of the year will see three products from Fiery Dragon. *Counter Collection II* ($14.95) features 450 cut-out counters featuring d20 beasts ranging from hideous monsters to intrepid adventurers, with art by the redoubtable Claudio Pozas. *Gates of Oblivion* ($9.95), a 40-page adventure by Jason Kempton, maroons adventurers on a prison world, while *Beyond All Reason* ($10.95), by Todd Secord & James Bell, sets heroes on the trail of misbehaving fire giants.

Green Ronin Publishing
At long last, Chris Pramas (with help from Matt Forbeck and Hal Mangold) unleashes the whole of the piratical city of Freeport on an unsuspecting world with *Freeport: The City of Adventure* ($29.95). The setting for the Origins Award-winning *Death in Freeport* adventure (as well as *Terror in Freeport*, *Madness in Freeport*, and *Hell in Freeport*) finally gets its own hardcover sourcebook in January, complete with a full-color pull-out map of the city.

Malhavoc Press
Two well-regarded hits from *Dungeon Master's Guide* designer Monte Cook's premium online publishing company come to the printed page under White Wolf's Sword & Sorcery Studios imprint. *The Demon God's Fane* (by Cook) is a 32-page adventure that sets 14th-15th-level adventurers against a depraved cult. Speaking of depraved, madness-tinged *Psionics Handbook* author Bruce R. Cordell released his first non-Wizards of the Coast d20 material through Malhavoc in December with *If Thoughts Could Kill*, a full-length adventure that "explores psionic potential and showcases the true power of psionic characters and adversaries." In February, Cordell's adventure hits gamestore shelves as a printed 40-page product.

Cook remains dedicated to Malhavoc's pdf concerns, and February will see a sequel to the highly popular *Book of Eldritch Might* entitled (appropriately enough) *Book of Eldritch Might II: Songs & Souls of Power*. In addition to the usual run of new spells, monsters, and prestige classes, Cook has taken it upon himself to completely redesign the bard, giving members of that class access to a completely new form of magic. For more information, stop by www.montecook.com.

Mongoose Publishing
One of the most prolific d20 publisher floods the gates with no fewer than five (!) titles in the first two months of the year. Fans of Mongoose's popular *Slayer's Guides* series will want to be on the lookout for *The Quintessential Fighter*, *Encyclopaedia Arcane: Chaos Magic—Wild Spellcraft*, *Ships of the Elves*, *The Slayer's Guide to Sahuagin*, and *The Quintessential Rogue*.

Necromancer Games
Necromancer brings home the "First Edition Feel" with four offerings in the first two months of the year. *What Evil Lurks*, a 48-page adventure by Lance Hawvermale, is a dark mystery involving a strange machine called the *Soul Engine*, which taps into the nefarious Plane of Shadow. *Tomb of Abysthor* author Clark Peterson calls his adventure a "classic dungeon delve," and promises a challenging foray into the forgotten corrupted burial halls of a paladin goddess.

Fans of the truly old school will appreciate *Maze of Zayene II: Dimensions of Flight*, by Robert Kuntz. The adventure debuted almost 20 years ago as a knock-off First Edition D&D product, and returns with updated rules, new art, and new material. Lastly, February sees the end of the Rappan Athuk nigh-impossible dungeon adventure series with *Rappan Athuk II: The Lower Levels*, by Bill Webb and Clark Peterson. After negotiating a Tomb of Horrors-like dungeon, players "get" to meet an avatar of the death demon Orcus himself. Fun!

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!

WE'RE IN A STRANGE TOWN, WE'RE BROKE, WE'RE IN A DIVE BAR, AND YOU EXPECT YOUR "HEROIC GOOD LOOKS" TO GET US WORK?!?
NOD
NOD
NOD
NOD
YOU HAVE THE LOOK OF A HERO! FAME AND FORTUNE ARE YOURS FOR THE TAKING IF YOU'RE BRAVE ENOUGH TO ENTER THE TOMB OF DOOM!
ZIP
ZIP
Stan!
HOW DO YOU DO THAT?!?
YOU HAVE THE LOOK ....
BEAT IT!
©2001 STAN! WWW.BOLTANDQUIVER.COM

THE SLEEP SPELLS OF YOUR DEMONIC GNOLL ADEPT WEAKEN HIS CRUSADERS.

A HUMAN PALADIN **DESTROYS** YOUR ABYSSAL RAVAGER WITH SMITE EVIL.

HIS PALADIN IS CRIPPLED WITH A CRUEL ARROW FROM YOUR GNOLL RANGER.

YOUR DEMONIC GNOLL ADEPT'S FLAIL PROVIDES **THE KILLING BLOW.**

VICTORY FOR NARESH

Stand-alone miniatures combat game for two or more players.

The first name in fantasy-miniatures combat is back with a vengeance.

The **Dungeons & Dragons® Chainmail®** miniatures game is an everything-goes battle royale based on the d20 system and features some of the most infamous creatures the **D&D®** universe has ever known.

You're the commander of a skirmish-level force representing one of six unique factions. Build your army with care, or feel the sting of classic **D&D** spells and new abilities taken straight from the *Player's Handbook*.

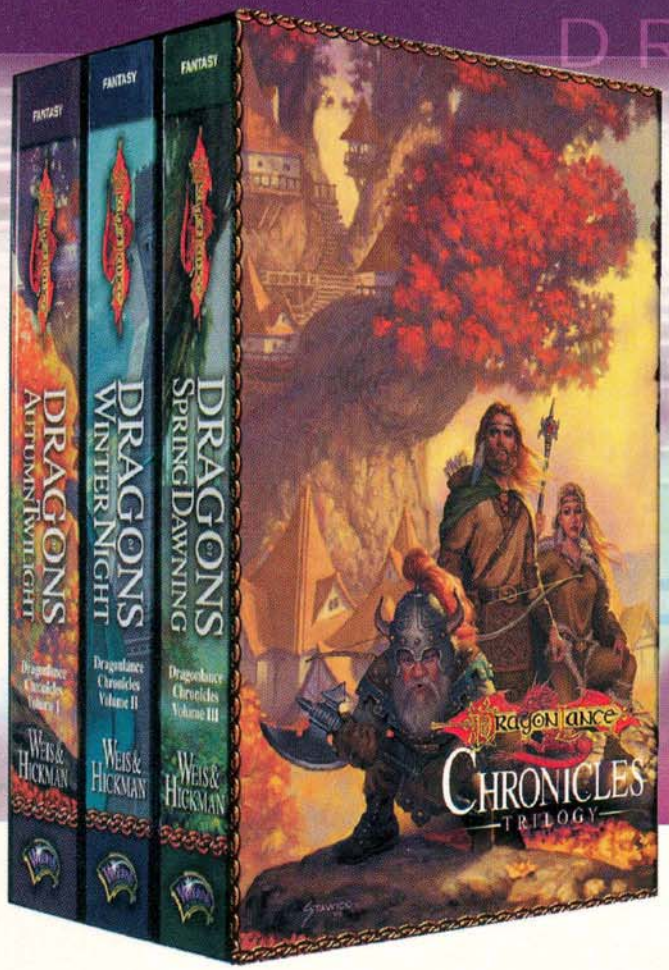
Time to throw down.

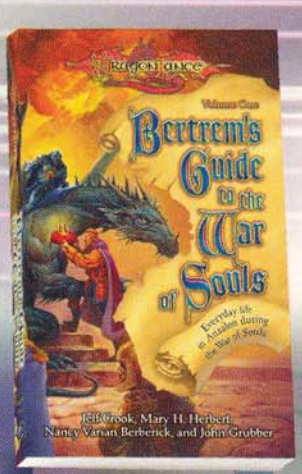
www.wizards.com/chainmail

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® CHAINMAIL® MINIATURES GAME

All trademarks, including character names and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Model by Ben Siens. ©2001 Wizards.

DRAGONLANCE




DRAGONLANCE
Volume One
Bertrem's Guide to the War of Souls
Everyday life in Ansalon during the War of Souls
Jeff Crook, Mary H. Herbert
Nancy Varian Berberick, and John Grubber

CHRONICLES TRILOGY GIFT SET Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman *$20.97 U.S.; $29.97 CAN*

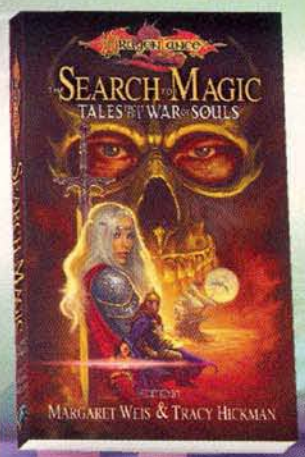
BERTREM'S GUIDE TO THE WAR OF SOULS, VOLUME ONE Nancy Varian Berberick, Jeff Crook, John Grubber & Mary H. Herbert *$6.99 U.S.; $9.99 CAN*

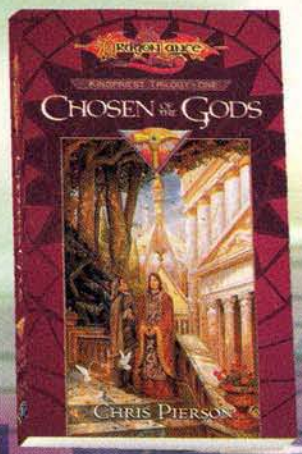
THE SEARCH FOR MAGIC: TALES FROM THE WAR OF SOULS ed. Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman *$6.99 U.S.; $9.99 CAN*

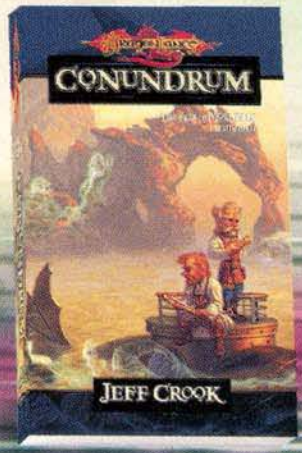
CHOSEN OF THE GODS: KINGPRIEST TRILOGY, VOLUME ONE Chris Pierson *$6.99 U.S.; $9.99 CAN*

CONUNDRUM: THE AGE OF MORTALS Jeff Crook *$6.99 U.S.; $9.99 CAN*

fantasy







All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2001 Wizards.

The world of **Dragonlance**® continues to expand—into the future, as well as the past. Spanning the ages from before the Chronicles all the way to the exciting new War of Souls, some of the hottest bestselling authors tell the newest stories of the heroes, villains and events of Krynn. And every tale adds to the already breathtaking saga of one of the most popular fantasy settings around. So, pick them up at your favorite game or book store.

Get free sample chapters of featured books at

www.wizards.com/books

CONQUER THE WORLD

Join the **Dungeons & Dragons®**
Chainmail® Miniatures Game League.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

CHAINMAIL®

MINIATURES GAME LEAGUE

You have the warbands and you have the skill. It's time to prove yourself in the field with the **Dungeons & Dragons Chainmail** Miniatures Game League. As a DCI™-sanctioned program, it's a great place to test your mettle and meet new players—all while competing for anything from cool prizes to invitations to championship events.

You don't have to be an undefeated warmaster to play. Every skill level will have a chance to fight. And win.

Take on the world. One table at a time.

www.wizards.com/chainmail

All trademarks, including character names and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Illustration by Todd Lockwood. ©2001 Wizards.

DCI d20 system Wizards

Requires the Dungeons & Dragons Players Handbook and Psionics Handbook!

THRILLI and DASHING ADVENTURES!

PULP HEROES

10¢
d20

ERIK MONA
EDITOR

Stories by
David Noonan
Karl Hammerton
Sylvia Fox-Renard

WIZARDS OF THE COAST PERIODICALS, SEATTLE, PUBLISHERS OF
AMAZING STORIES - DRAGON - DUNGEON - PULP HEROES - POLYHEDRON - FANTASTIC STORIES

PULP HEROES

Dashing and *Thrilling Adventures*

Vol. 1 January, 1931 No.1

In Our Next Issue

CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG AND THE EYE OF THE STORM, by Lucas Sanderson (A Serial in three parts). "The most important maneuver you can make in bad weather is the one hundred eighty-degree turn," said the old-timer at the airstrip in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. But Capt. Armstrong's converted B-23 was carrying plague serum, so he grimly flew into the face of the century's worst tropical storm. Join Captain Armstrong and the rest of the *Avenging Angel*'s crew as they battle weather, savages, and strange voodoo magic in the darkest jungles of Central America. Will they reach the gravely ill archeologists in time, or will the mysterious disease spread like a cancer across the Americas?

MURDERERS' MARATHON, by Sylvia Fox-Renard. Everyone knows that madmen hear voices that tell them to do all sorts of unspeakable things. But what if the voices start to argue, fighting for control of the madman's mind? The Enigma Agency sends Nora Carter to the bustling city of Northport to bring a race among serial-killers to a quick end. Amateur psychologists will find Ms. Fox-Renard's description of the criminal psyche both chilling and clinically accurate.

TERROR AT TWO HUNDRED FATHOMS, by Marko Savage. In this tale, one of Savage's best, Jonathan Gant goes undercover aboard a Nazi "U-Boat" submarine only to discover the Fuhrer's secret biology laboratory off the Eastern Seaboard. The monstrosities of the ocean depths will become fascism's most powerful weapon unless Gant can stop it. But combat is no easy matter when there's no breathable air and the water pressure can kill even the strongest man in seconds. Fans of the Gant stories should also note that this story marks yet another appearance of Gant's arch-foe, Fraulein Fëir.

EARTHMEN: COLLECT THEM ALL!, by Karl Hammerton. In this frightening—and frightfully good—scientific yarn, explorers from the planet Mars come to small-town Earth to collect scientific samples. But the residents of Bailey's Harbor, Wisconsin, aren't ready to be collected yet! Can the residents of this All-American town find the alien "collectors" in their midst before they all become exhibits in a horrific Martian museum?

In Our January Issue

Introduction
By David Noonan.....15

The Sinister Origin of Professor Prometheus
By Michael Chambers.....17

A Dame With Class ... and a .38
By Sir Ian Pensingstoke.....23

A Thousand Skills, a Thousand Kills
By Karl Hammerton.....37

Feats of Daring in the Palace of Peril
By Sylvia Fox-Renard.....43

Into the Pulp Era
By Marko Savage.....47

The Deadliest Equipment Money Can Buy
By Archibald McKill.....51

Chasing the Sky Wraith
By Dirk Chambers.....55

The Cover

This issue depicts a scene from the story entitled "Feats of Daring in the Palace of Peril," by Sylvia Fox-Renard, in which is shown the graphic 12th hour rescue of gun moll Deborah Dare by her lover Jack Masterson from the clutches of Professor Prometheus's deadly "matron" robot-statues.

Cover Illustration by Tony Harris.

Published Monthly by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., Lind Ave. SW, Renton, WA

OFFICERS
Johnny Wilson, *Publisher*
Erik Mona, *Editor*
Andy James, *Typesetting*
Sean Glenn, *Logos and Ad Design*
Leanne Buckley, *Chapter Illustration*
Kalman Andrasofszky, *Class Illustration*
Richard Pace, *Interior Illustration*

EDITORIAL AND EXECUTIVE OFFICES
1801 Lind Ave. SW, Renton, WA

Pulp Heroes, written by David Noonan, utilizes game mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison and the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* by Bill Slavicsek, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker. This Wizards of the Coast game contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission.

INTRODUCTION

By David Noonan

Author of "Manual of the Planes," "Song & Silence," etc.

In the heyday of the pulps (the '20s and '30s), a dime or a quarter bought you a lurid-covered magazine made from the cheapest grade of paper—hence the term "pulp fiction." Inside you'd find page after page of action and adventure stories. In an era without television or effects-laden movies, a pulp magazine like Adventure *or* Amazing Stories *promised hours exploring the jungles of darkest Africa or watching the sun set over a mountain range on Mars. Illustrations were sparse, and the writing was as often very bad as very good. But what the pulps offered was transportation away from the workaday world into fantastic realms—transportation without any artifice or prop beyond the printed page.*

What roleplayers do around the gaming table isn't so different. Our stories of clerics, rogues, Jedis, and starpilots involve the creation of elaborate, imaginary worlds—and elaborate rules to match. But unlike movies, television, computer games, or even radio, we're doing it with almost no props. For roleplayers, it's just a bunch of friends sitting around the basement table, until the first die hits the table. Then we're transported to our own fantastic realms. Just like the pulp fiction readers of the last century.

Source Material

If you want to learn more about pulp fiction, the best place to start is with the terrific authors that emerged from the field. Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler practically defined the hard-boiled detective; *The Thin Man*, *The Big Sleep*, and *The Maltese Falcon* are good entry points. For more hero-oriented pulp fiction, try the Doc Savage compilations. The Shadow has been reprinted in book form, but the compilations of the old radio broadcasts are more evocative (and much easier to find). The silver screen brought the Pulp Era to life most effectively in the Indiana Jones films. And if 21st-century comic books are your bag, try *Tom Strong* or *Planetary*, both of which make frequent nods to the golden age of pulp fiction.

The Noir-Wahoo Spectrum

Pulp magazines included early science fiction, hardboiled detective stories, creepy horror, gangster tales, and war stories—sometimes in the same issue! Running a *Pulp Heroes* campaign can be a challenge when one character is a masked vigilante, another is a wise-cracking biplane pilot, a third is a crazy inventor named "Professor Prometheus" and the fourth is a master of voodoo rites.

Such a lineup leads to an immediate question: Will the unfolding story of the campaign be a dark mystery focusing on crime, betrayal, and the hidden motives of the human heart? Or is it an adventure to the center of the earth to keep evil Nazi scientists from detonating nega-bombs that will destroy North America in a sea of lava? Will your tales be noir or wahoo? As a gamemaster (GM), you have two options.

Option 1: Pick a spot on the noir-wahoo spectrum and stick with it. If you want hardboiled detective stories, keep the albino cannibal apes, ray guns, and jet packs out of your game. If you want to go with wild "future-as-it-might-have-been" adventures, encourage your players to make characters who live on the extremes. Once your gaming group has made its choice, you can focus your efforts on having the campaign you want.

Option 2: Bounce all over the noir-wahoo spectrum. It's fun to tweak pulp stereotypes like the hard-boiled noir detective and the golden age sci-fi scientist/hero. What better way to have fun with the conventions of all the pulp sub-genres than to put Sam Spade and Tarzan next to each other? It takes a higher degree of "willing suspension of disbelief" to pull off this option. But by stretching the limits of the famous pulp cliches, you can create a story that combines the best elements of all the subgenres into something that's all your own.

Rules in Brief

In an effort to provide a complete game, we've constructed game rules that are as concise as possible. In general, the *Pulp Heroes* game uses the same rules as DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. If you have questions about how a *Pulp Heroes* rule works, you can usually find the answer there. You'll want, at the very least, a copy of the *Players Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Psionics Handbook* to play. GMs also may wish to consult the *Monster Manual* to find adversaries for your pulp heroes.

RAPPAN ATHUK 2

The Dungeon of Graves: The Middle Levels

Though you lost several of your companions
in the Upper Levels, you want more!

Do you dare assault the hidden Temple of Orcus?

Can you locate the famed Passage to the Gates of Hell?

Will you find the Titan Ereg Tal?

Or will you fall prey to the Phase Minotaurs
or Kazleth the Minotaur King?

You must descend still further into
Rappan Athuk to learn the answer.

A pity you won't live to tell the tale.

NECROMANCER GAMES

AVAILABLE NOW!

d20 system

Sword & Sorcery is a trademark of Sword & Sorcery Studios. All rights reserved. Rappan Athuk 2 The Dungeon of Graves: The Middle Levels, Necromancer Games and Necromancer Games logo are trademarks of Necromancer Games, Inc. All rights reserved. 'd20 System' and the d20 System logo are Trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast and are used with permission.

Chapter 1

The Sinister ORIGIN of Professor Prometheus

~By Michael Chambers~

Author of "Dateline: London, Target: Hitler," "Escape From the Ziggurat of Terror," Etc.

Tarzan was orphaned in Africa as an infant and raised by apes. John Carter was a Confederate soldier before he was whisked away to Mars. The Shadow's alter ego, Lamont Cranston, is fabulously rich.

Many pulp characters led interesting lives before they ever became adventurers. Where many ***d20 System*** *games have races or species to choose from,* Pulp Heroes *offers a variety of Origins. By choosing an Origin, you're deciding a little of your character's backstory—and making a choice that influences his or her abilities and skills.*

While your Origin gives you some cues as you make later decisions about your character, don't think of it as a straitjacket—use it as a springboard when the time is right.

It's a pulp fiction cliché that characters often have hidden pasts that they reveal only when the time is right— the damsel with wealthy parents or the detective who grew up in the Far East. If your GM approves, you can choose no Origin at the beginning of play. If you later find that one of the Origins appeals to you (especially if you're in a jam and need a bonus), you can reveal your Origin by explaining it to the other characters on the spot. Retroactively add the bonuses and features of the Origin to your character and proceed as if that Origin had always been a part of your character.

For example, a group of adventurers is being menaced in the South American jungle by a pack of carnivorous albino apes. (We'll ignore the fact that large apes don't exist in South America. Pulp authors certainly did.) A private eye character, who hasn't picked an Origin yet, asks the GM if she can take the Primitive Origin and make a Handle Animal check. The private eye explains that her father was a botanist who dragged her from jungle to jungle as a child. When crocodiles ate him 15 years ago, she was sent back to Northport as a ward of the state. She then makes her Handle Animal check with the +2bonus from the Primitive Origin. She succeeds, describing a series of submissive pantomines that convinces the albino apes to back off—for now.

If you choose this variant, start characters out speaking English and having access to Middle Class resources. They might find themselves "suddenly" speaking more languages or with access to more or fewer resources once they've announced their Origin.

All-American

This Origin is perhaps the least unusual—All-American characters grew up in middle-class families in the cities and farms of America. This is a real "mom-and-apple-pie" upbringing, with close family and a stable environment.

The advantage to pulp characters who grew up with the All-American lifestyle is that the supportive family life gave them freedom to explore their interests and aptitudes. All-American characters tend to be well-rounded and adaptive, adjusting quickly to even the strangest events. Many wear their patriotism on their sleeve, which can be annoying to their more cynical peers. But the optimism and "can-do" attitude that many All-American characters express can act as a tonic in the bleak situations in which pulp characters often find themselves.

While this Origin is called All-American, it works just as well for loyal citizens who enjoy a happy upbringing in other nations. A French character could be just as proud of the tricolor and adopt this Origin, calling himself a "True Frenchman" rather than an All-American.

All-American Origin Benefits

- 1 extra feat at 1st level, because the All-American attitude stresses mastery of varied talents.
- 4 extra skill points at 1st level and 1 extra skill point at each additional level, because All-Americans tend to be versatile and capable. (The 4 skill points at 1st level are added on as a bonus, not multiplied in.)
- Automatic Language: English. Characters using a renamed All-American can take their native language instead.

● Starting Resources: Middle Class. All-American characters can purchase items marked as Middle Class or lower without changing their financial situation. See Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for details.

Aristocrat

While the All-American attitude stresses freedom and equality for all, there's no question that some have a head start. Aristrocrat characters were either born into wealth or acquired it before their adventuring career began. They retain access to money, gear, and services that most characters can only dream of. Best of all, they're free to use their resources without spending an inordinate amount of time managing their financial empire.

Aristocrat characters are prized by others for their access to resources, but many crave recognition for something other than the fact that they're rich. The drive to prove themselves makes many Aristocrats push themselves hard. While some retain blue-blood attitudes toward the lower classes, other Aristocrat characters are eager to show just how egalitarian they can be. Some go so far as to adopt secret identities and protect those less fortunate than themselves on one night, then sipping champagne among their wealthy peers the next evening.

Aristocrat Origin Benefits

● +2 Charisma, –2 Strength. Aristocrats receive training in manners and charm, but they rarely have to lift a finger, much less do the hard physical labor required of the working classes.

● +2 Origin bonus to Knowledge (high society) and Profession (management). Aristocrats see each other socially and have a wide circle of acquaintances. Whether they're active in the source of their wealth or not, Aristocrats learn at least a modicum of business principles.

● Starting Language: English. Natives of other countries can choose a different language if they prefer.

● Starting Resources: Rich. Aristocrat characters can purchase items marked as Rich or lower without changing their financial situation. See Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for details.

Cloistered

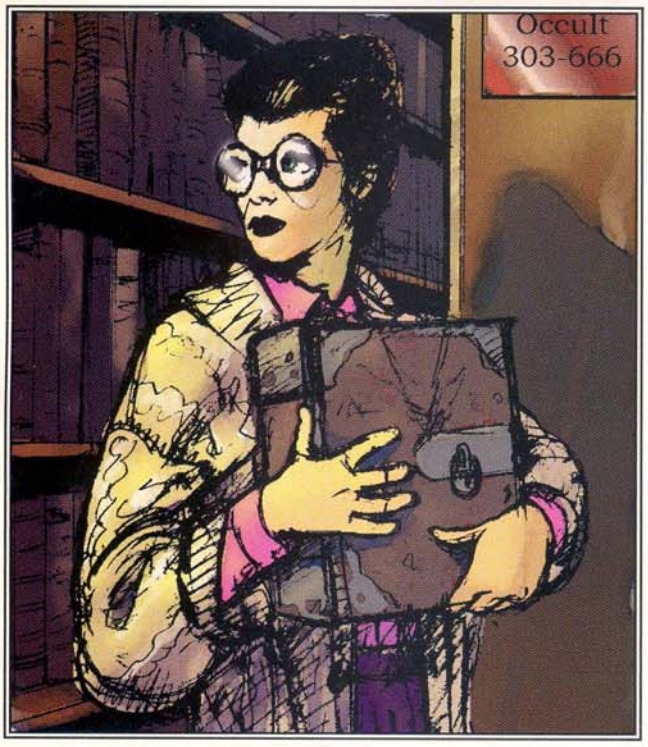
Some pulp characters grew up in Nepalese mountain fortresses, honing their martial artistry. Others grew up in the ivory tower of academia, immersing themselves in science from an early age. And some are themselves scientific experiments in top-secret efforts to breed the perfect warrior. Whatever the exact situation, Cloistered characters spend much of their childhood and adolescence isolated from the world at large. Such characters miss out on contact with the wider world, but are rewarded with the chance to excel at the subject of their choosing.

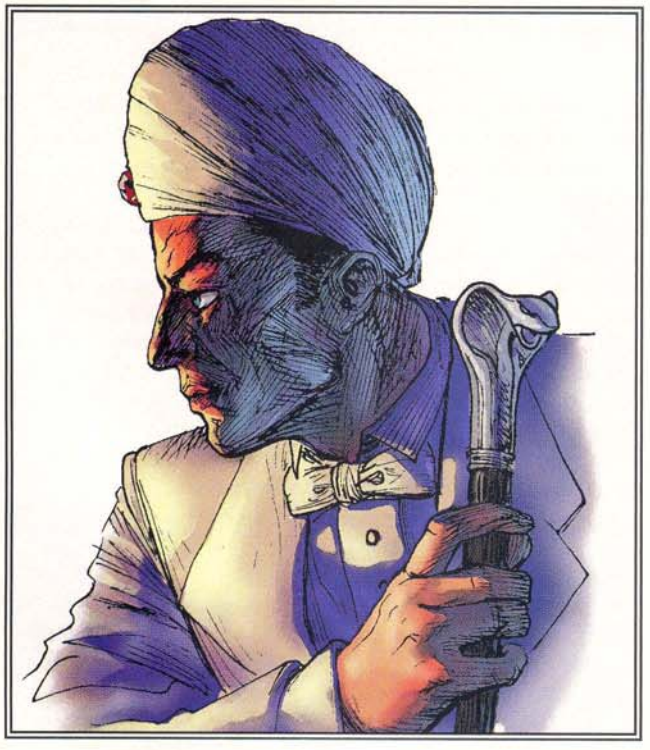
Some characters chose their lives of isolation, eagerly separating themselves from the world. Others never had the choice, being raised by a mysterious organization for an altruistic or sinister purpose.

Cloistered characters tend to be quiet and somewhat withdrawn; they lack the social context that many other characters share. They find light banter uncomfortable, because they don't know a lot about sports, popular culture, or sometimes even the weather. Many are eager to learn more about the larger world, however, as their natural curiosity makes up for lost time. Everyday experiences like frying an egg or seeing a baseball game can take on a magical aspect for cloistered characters, who've never seen them before.

Cloistered Origin Benefits

● +2 Wisdom, –2 Charisma. Cloistered characters find their time in isolation has made them unusually perceptive and aware. But their interpersonal skills are somewhat underdeveloped from lack of practice.





- Free Feat: Skill Emphasis. This feat represents the extra learning the character received while set apart from the rest of the world.
- Rigorous Training: Choose from a +2 Origin bonus to Fortitude, Reflex, or Will saving throws. This represents the harsher aspects of cloistered life, whether the challenges were physical or mental in nature.
- Starting Language: Any one language. The language is usually the one spoken inside the walls of whatever organization cloistered the character. If you don't want to deal with languages in your game, feel free to give cloistered characters access to English as well.
- Starting Resources: Poor. Cloistered characters can purchase items marked as Poor or lower without changing their financial situation. See Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for details.

Cosmopolitan

Unlike characters who spend their childhoods in isolated training, Cosmopolitan characters had access to the wonders of the world from an early age. While most world travelers in the Pulp Era are wealthy, it's possible that the cosmopolitan character saw the world with parents who were travel guides or is simply an accomplished stowaway.

However the child managed to explore the world, the dozens of ports and cities have left an impression on him. He tends to be accepting of others because he's seen the breadth and variety that the world has to offer. Some Cosmopolitan characters can be somewhat jaded, however, as they feel they've seen it all before. But their knowledge of global customs, their multilingual skills, and their "been there, done that" unflappability can make them real assets in a world-spanning pulp adventure.

Cosmopolitan Origin Benefits

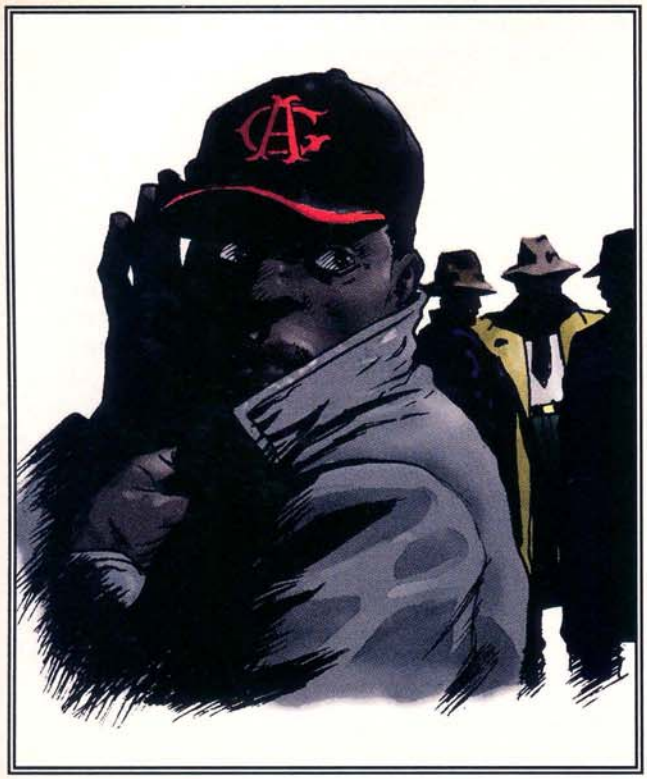
- +2 Origin bonus to any of the area-based Knowledge skills: America, developing world, Europe, Far East, unknown territories.
- +1 Origin bonus to Diplomacy checks and +1 Origin bonus to Sense Motive checks. After seeing a thousand customs officials, shady merchants, and rude waiters, your character has a keen sense of how to get what he wants.
- Starting Language: English and any three other languages. Your parents probably spoke multiple languages to you in the crib, and you've been multilingual as long as you can remember.
- Starting Resources: Middle Class. Cosmopolitan characters can purchase items marked as Middle Class or lower without changing their financial situation. See Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for details.

On the Run

On the Run characters also are well-traveled, but they rarely had time or inclination to see the sights. For these characters, the defining aspect of their lives has been their effort to elude capture (or worse) by some large, pervasive organization. Maybe an On the Run character is wanted for a crime he didn't commit—or maybe one he did. Maybe he knows the secrets of some shadowy cabal, and they'll stop at nothing to silence him. Or perhaps he's double-crossed a crime syndicate and wound up with a price on his head.

Whatever the reason for the chase, the On the Run character faces persistent, organized pursuers who have the resources and motivation to find him even if he moves away or keeps a low profile. So life is a series of tenuous friendships and spotty employment, because the character never knows when the knock on the front door will send him scurrying out the back door.

If such a character is still at large, it's a testament to both luck and his ability to adopt a new cover at a moment's notice. The ability to notice a too-curious bystander helps, too.



On the Run characters are very concerned with the loyalty of their comrades, because they live in fear that someone will turn them in. Conversely, they tend to be fiercely loyal to those who've earned their trust; in such an uncertain world, they'll cling to whatever stable friends they can find. Some characters On the Run hope to finally run far enough away or disappear under a deep enough cover. Others spend every waking moment planning how they'll turn the tables on their pursuers and be the hunter, not the hunted.

On the Run Origin Benefits

- +2 Origin bonus to Spot, Listen, and Bluff checks. On the Run characters always have their guard up for trouble, and they can fast-talk with the best of them.
- +1 luck bonus to all saves. Sometimes dumb luck is all that keeps a character alive to flee another day.
- Starting Language: English. Natives of other countries can choose a different language if they prefer.
- Starting Resources: Working Class. On the Run characters can purchase items marked as Working Class or lower without changing their financial situation. See Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for details.

Primitive

Primitive characters might hail from the Australian outback, the South American jungles, or deepest, darkest Africa. Or maybe they're members of a North American Indian tribe. They may be Caucasian, raised by natives and returned somehow to civilization. Or maybe they grew up in an exotic culture and were drawn to Western Civilization somehow.

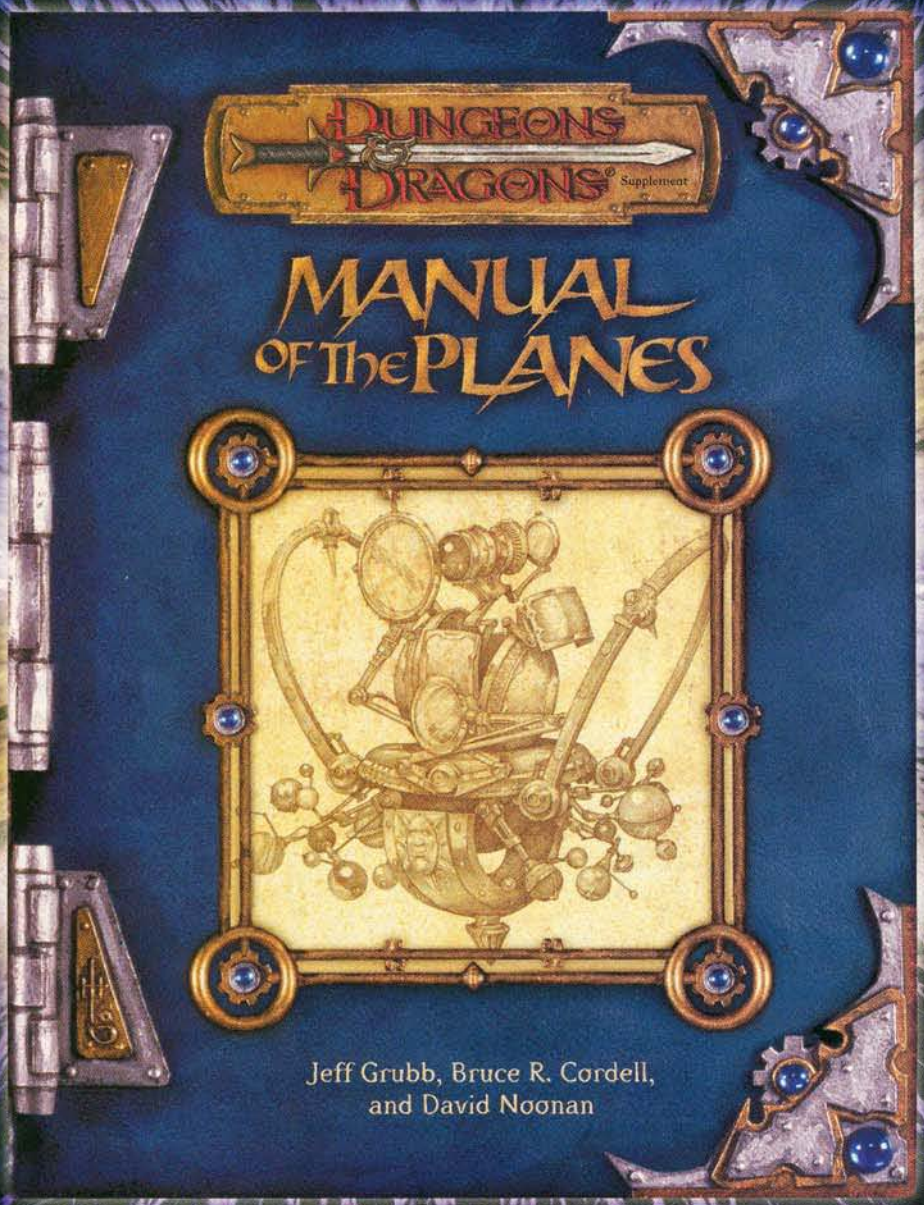
Whatever their exact origin, all Primitive characters share an affinity for living off the land and an intimate knowledge of the wilderness. In a world where most people feel that the wilderness is something to be conquered and tamed, they spare no effort to protect it from those who would despoil or exploit it. On their home turf, they're a force to be reckoned with. And even in the urban jungles, they can stalk and hunt with the best of them.

Like Cloistered characters, primitive characters tend to be quiet. The frenetic pace of urban life can be bewildering, so it's often wiser to remain silent, observe as much as possible, and try not to let the blinking lights and roaring engines get too distracting. Primitive characters tend to treat others as they treat the wilderness or the Primitive's culture. If they at least attempt to be respectful, most Primitive characters will give their urban counterparts the benefit of the doubt. If they willingly exploit or demean what the Primitive character cherishes, however, they may earn an enemy for life.

Primitive Origin Benefits

- +2 Origin bonus to Handle Animal checks. Most primitive cultures have a close relationship with the animal world, whether they hunt or raise animals for food.
- +4 Origin bonus to Wilderness Lore checks. Primitive characters are master trackers and can live off the land with little difficulty.
- Free Feat: Weapon Proficiency (primitive). This feat is in addition to any feats the character earns by virtue of class and level.
- Starting Language: Any one language. The language is usually the tribal tongue of the primitive character's home; in some cases, it's a language spoken by animals. If you don't want to deal with languages in your game, feel free to give Primitive characters access to English as well.
- Starting Resources: Destitute. Primitive characters can purchase only items marked as Destitute. See Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for details.

WHEN YOU'VE FINISHED SAVING THE WORLD, MOVE ON TO THE NEXT.



Finding a real challenge in a high-level **D&D®** game can be pretty tough. But with the *Manual of the Planes*, you've got a whole multiverse out there that's in need of powerful heroes. And with new skills, feats, races, prestige classes, equipment, and more, the characters might even be up to the task. Of course, with all the guidelines and examples that a DM needs to create custom-made planar settings, it's a whole new game. So, pick up your copy of the *Manual of the Planes* at your favorite game or hobby store. And take your campaign to a new level.

d20 system

www.wizards.com/dnd

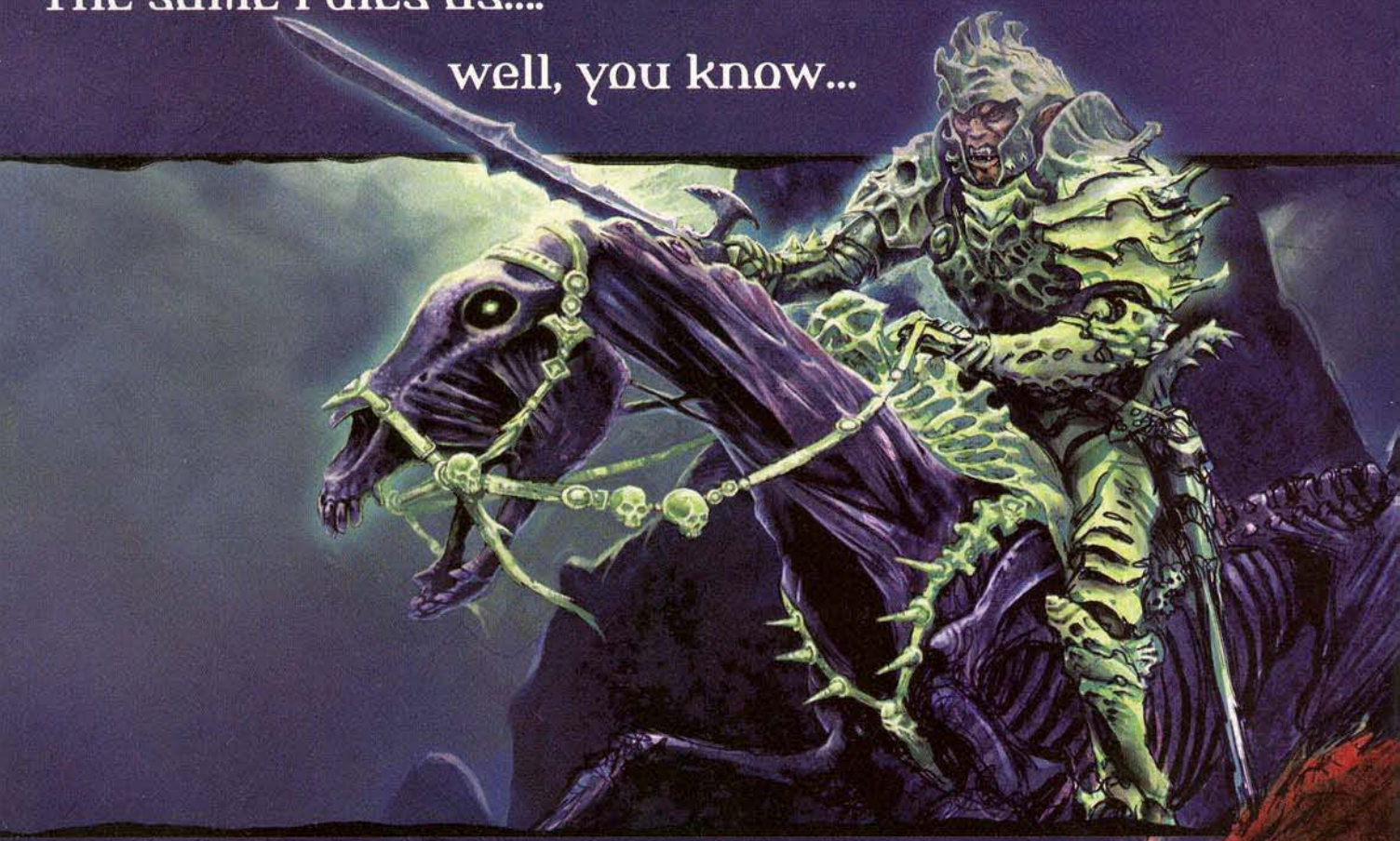
All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2001 Wizards.

Graphic Design by an Origins Award winning Art Director...

Written by Wolfgang Baur, former editor of Dragon Magazine...

The same rules as....

well, you know...



SUN & SCALE™

The Gryphon's Legacy

November 2001

It's Time to Get Serious About Your Game!

GASLIGHT PRESS

d20 system

The Gryphon's Legacy SKU: GLT1051 ISBN: 0-9713526-0-7 Price: $12.95 For more information go to **www.osseum.com/gaslightpress**

Sun & Scale is a registered Trademark of Gaslight Press. All rights reserved. 'd20 System' and the d20 System logo are Trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast and are used with permission.

Chapter 2

A Dame With CLASS ... and a .38

~By Sir Ian Pensingstoke~

Author of "Launch the Tunnel Rockets At America!," "When Ghouls Awake," Etc.

Pulp heroes are a varied lot. Some are driven by altruism: the desire to make the world a better, safer place. Others have darker motives, like revenge or other obsessions. And some are in it for $50, plus expenses.

Your character's class helps determine how you'll achieve those goals. Some characters are brilliant scientists whose inventions help them win the day. Others rely on keen insight into human nature and a vast network of underworld contacts, or the skills honed in the darkest jungles of Africa. Maybe you'll let your fists—or your pearl-handled Colt .45s—do the talking. Your character can choose any of these means to an end, and your character class determines which techniques suit you best.

Hero Classes

The *Pulp Heroes* game has seven main classes suitable for player characters:

Explorer: A traveler to distant lands and civilizations who can adapt to nearly any situation.

Gangster: An underworld figure, often connected to an organized crime family.

Martial Artist: A warrior who dismisses modern firearms in favor of exotic hand-to-hand combat techniques from the mysterious Far East.

Mystic: A delver into ancient secrets of the mind and soul.

Private Eye: A detective-for-hire skilled in investigation, surveillance, and analytical skills.

Scientist: A brilliant inventor capable of building wondrous machines that push the boundaries of science.

Soldier: Often a current or former member of the armed forces who excels at marksmanship. Some are also adept at piloting airplanes and more exotic craft.

Class Name Abbreviations: Class names are abbreviated as follows: Exr, explorer; Gng, gangster; Mar, martial artist; Mys, mystic; Pri, private eye; Sci, scientist; and Sol, soldier.

Multiclass Characters

Each time your character earns a new level, you can choose to take another level in your previous class or choose a new class. Adding a new class broadens your repertoire of abilities, but at the expense of focused expertise in a single class.

Rules for creating and advancing multiclass characters can be found at the end of this section.

Level Dependent Benefits

Beyond the skills, attack bonuses, saving throw bonuses, and other class features outlined for each class, characters gain other benefits from advancing in levels. Table 2-1: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits identifies how many experience points (XP) are required to attain each level and what benefits characters get at each level, regardless of their character class.

Multiclass characters use their total character level on this table. In other words, a 3rd-level soldier/5th-level explorer is an 8th-level character.

XP Total: The number of experience points required to attain this level.

Class Skill Max Ranks: The maximum possible number of ranks in each skill for a character of this level. A skill counts as a class skill if it's on the class list of any of the character's classes.

Cross-Class Skill Max Ranks: As above, but the maximum for skills that don't appear on the character's class list.

Feats: The level at which characters can choose another feat.

Ability Increases: The level at which characters can improve the ability score of their choice by 1 point.

Class Descriptions

Each class section below begins with a description of how that class functions in the Pulp Era, including occupations that such characters usually hold and an indication of how such characters see themselves and the *Pulp Heroes* world around them.

Game rule information follows, including which ability scores are important to the class and what type of die such characters use to determine their vitality points. A table indicates what their base attack bonus is at each level, how their

saving throw bonuses progress, and what class features they earn at each level. The table also indicates how the character's Defense bonus (which helps the character avoid getting shot or punched) and Reputation (how famous they are in the Pulp Era) improve.

This section also tells you how many skill points the character can spend at each level and which skills are class skills. Remember that at 1st level, characters get four times as many skill points to spend.

Table 2-1: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits

Character Level	XP Total	Class Skill Max Ranks	Cross-class Skill Max Ranks	Ability Feats	Increases
1st	0	4	2	1st	—
2nd	1,000	5	2.5	—	—
3rd	3,000	6	3	2nd	—
4th	6,000	7	3.5	—	1st
5th	10,000	8	4	—	—
6th	15,000	9	4.5	3rd	—
7th	21,000	10	5	—	—
8th	28,000	11	5.5	—	2nd
9th	36,000	12	6	4th	—
10th	45,000	13	6.5	—	—
11th	55,000	14	7	—	—
12th	66,000	15	7.5	5th	3rd
13th	78,000	16	8	—	—
14th	91,000	17	8.5	—	—
15th	105,000	18	9	6th	—
16th	120,000	19	9.5	—	4th
17th	136,000	20	10	—	—
18th	153,000	21	10.5	7th	—
19th	171,000	22	11	—	—
20th	190,000	23	11.5	—	5th

Explorer

Whether they're leading expeditions into the jungles of the Amazon, the mysterious Himalayas, or even to prehistoric civilizations far below the surface of the earth, explorers pride themselves on their ability to overcome any obstacle.

Some explorers are scientifically-minded, studying the cultures they encounter or searching for new substances and lore. Others are more mercenary, seeking to plunder hidden shrines and tombs of long-forgotten wealth. Others explore for fame or simply the thrill of being the first to scale a particular mountain peak or the last to hunt a rare white rhinoceros.

The traveler's life means that explorers learn a lot about the myriad cultures that make up the Pulp Era, and they tend to have good interpersonal skills (to deal with natives and other expedition members). They can keep their heads about them in a fight, too—combat is just another occupational hazard to the explorer.

But where the explorer really excels is in the combination of physical and mental skills that their expeditions require. Whether they're scaling a sheer cliff or puzzling out an ancient inscription, explorers are most at home when they can put what they've learned in their travels to use.

Large universities, governments, and philanthropic organizations often sponsor explorers, but some fund their own expeditions or have wealthy private patrons. The exploits of higher-level explorers are often splashed across the front pages of the world's newspapers, which can lead in turn to further sponsorships. But explorers know that they're only as good as their last adventure, and their rivals are quick to launch even more daring attempts. Some less-than-scrupulous explorers have even been known to sabotage each other's expeditions.

Game Rule Information

Explorers have the following characteristics.

Abilities: Wisdom and Intelligence are necessary for explorers who seek out lost civilizations, and Charisma is important once the explorer meets the denizens of the lost civilization. Mountain climbers, big-game hunters, and other athletically-minded explorers favor Strength and Dexterity.

Vitality: 1d8 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills

The explorer's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Cha), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (6 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the explorer.

Weapon Proficiencies: The explorer begins play with the following feats: Weapon Proficiency (simple); Weapon Proficiency (pistols); Weapon Proficiency (rifles); and Exotic Weapon Proficiency (any one weapon).

Trailblazing: The explorer can discern the best route through unfamiliar or rugged terrain. When traveling in poor weather conditions or difficult terrain, the explorer can make a Wilderness Lore check to save travel time.

With a check result of 15 or better, the explorer reduces the total travel time by 25%. With a 25 or better, the time is reduced by 50%. The explorer can take 10 on this check, but she can't take 20. This ability only applies to long-term travel, not tactical movement.

Travel time is reduced for everyone traveling in the immediate vicinity of the explorer. An entire expedition caravan of supplies can benefit from an explorer's trailblazing. Travelers following behind the explorer, however, don't benefit and must pass through the terrain normally.

Find Traps: Explorers can use the Search skill to locate traps when the task has a Difficulty Class higher than 20. Furthermore, explorers can use the Disable

Device skill to bypass such traps. If the explorer beats the trap's Disable Device DC by 10 or more, he can study the trap, figure out how it works, and bypass it without disarming it.

Non-explorers can't find or disable traps whose DCs are above 20.

Bonus Language: At 2nd level and every third level thereafter, an explorer learns a new language from his travels. The explorer can both speak the new language and read it if it has a written form.

Endurance: The explorer gains the Endurance feat for free at 3rd level.

Uncanny Dodge: Beginning at 4th level, the explorer gains the ability to react to danger before his senses would otherwise warn him. At 4th level and above, he keeps his Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) even if caught flat-footed or otherwise unaware. He still loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense if something immobilizes him.

At 7th level, foes can't flank the explorer because he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. Only gangsters at least four levels higher than the explorer can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

At 13th level, the explorer gains an intuitive sense that warns him about danger from traps, giving him a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +2 dodge bonus to Defense against attacks by traps. At 16th level, these bonuses rise to +2, and at 19th level they rise to +3.

Skill Mastery: At 10th level and every five levels thereafter, the explorer selects a number of skills equal to his Intelligence modifier. The explorer can take 10 when making a skill check with these skills, even if stress and distractions would normally prevent him from being able to do so. He is now so confident in his skill that adverse conditions don't matter.

Sidekick: The explorer gains the Sidekick feat for free at 12th level.

Minions: The explorer gains the Minions feat for free at 18th level.

Gangster

Though he operates on the wrong side of the law, the gangster can indeed be a pulp hero. In the big cities, blocks of tenements teem with new immigrants and working-class families on the wrong side of the Great Depression. City Hall and the police force are often corrupt and in the pocket of wealthy industrialists—or even more sinister organizations. In such conditions organized crime thrives, becoming a sort of shadow government

Table 2-2: The Explorer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Score
1st	+0	+1	+1	+1	Weapon Proficiencies, Trailblazing	+3	3
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+2	Find Traps, Bonus Language	+4	+1
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+2	Endurance	+4	—
4th	+3	+2	+2	+2	Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to Defense)	+4	+1
5th	+3	+3	+3	+3	Bonus Language	+5	—
6th	+4	+3	+3	+3	—	+5	+1
7th	+5	+4	+4	+4	Uncanny Dodge (Can't be flanked)	+6	—
8th	+6	+4	+4	+4	Bonus Language	+6	+1
9th	+6	+4	+4	+4	—	+6	—
10th	+7	+5	+5	+5	Skill Mastery	+7	+1
11th	+8	+5	+5	+5	Bonus Language	+7	—
12th	+9	+6	+6	+6	Sidekick	+8	+1
13th	+9	+6	+6	+6	Uncanny Dodge (+1 against traps)	+8	—
14th	+10	+6	+6	+6	Bonus Language	+8	+1
15th	+11	+7	+7	+7	Skill Mastery	+9	—
16th	+12	+7	+7	+7	Uncanny Dodge (+2 against traps)	+9	+1
17th	+12	+8	+8	+8	Bonus Language	+10	—
18th	+13	+8	+8	+8	Minions	+10	+1
19th	+14	+8	+8	+8	Uncanny Dodge (+3 against traps)	+10	—
20th	+15	+9	+9	+9	Skill Mastery, Bonus Language	+11	+1

that keeps the peace and enforces order—or at least enough order that organized crime stays on top.

A gangster character operates with at least some degree of autonomy from the various organized crime families and criminal syndicates that rule the underworld. Some gangster characters are hardened hit-men and leg-breakers, but others provide vices like alcohol and gambling that the legitimate authorities are trying to stamp out. Gangsters also can be cat burglars, black marketeers, gun-runners or anyone else on the wrong side of the law. Finally, gangster characters might be trying to "go legit" and turn their backs on a life of crime. But their former associates and persistent law enforcement make doing so one of the most dangerous goals of all. Anytime money and violence make a dangerous mix, you'll find gangster characters stirring the pot.

Whatever their attitude toward law and authority now, gangsters' wayward pasts ensure that they have underworld skills that honest citizens never learn. And the shadows are a dangerous place to live, so they've picked up some ruthless combat abilities during the alley-fights and staredowns common to the gangster life.

Some gangster characters may still be in the pay of a larger criminal syndicate, while others are freelancing, running their own operations (although usually with at least the tacit approval of a larger organized crime family). Others are trying to cut ties to their criminal past, or at least keep a low enough profile that the police don't get wind of their whereabouts and activities. But sooner or later, the underworld has something to offer everyone. When that time comes, they'll want a gangster character on their side to negotiate the shadowy maze of the underworld.

Game Rule Information

Gangsters have the following characteristics.

Abilities: Charisma is useful for talking your way out of trouble, and Dexterity is useful for shooting or dodging your way out of serious trouble. Wisdom provides a degree of street smarts that can never really be learned.

Vitality: 1d8 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills: The gangster's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (underworld) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Sleight of Hand (Dex). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (6 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the gangster.

Weapon Proficiencies: The gangster begins play with the following feats: Weapon Proficiency (simple) and Weapon Proficiency (pistols).

Infamy: Gangsters earn reputation as other characters do, but their reputations are infamous, inspiring fear rather than respect. In many cases, the game effect is the same, but any reputation for positive, law-abiding activities during the course of play actually reduces the gangster's reputation (rather than increasing it) until a reputation score of 0 is reached. At that point, the character earns and uses reputation normally.

Gangster characters also can increase their infamous reputation during play by doing noteworthy criminal things, of course. Characters who simultaneously want the infamy of a gangster and a legitimate positive reputation should acquire the Secret Identity feat.

Sneak Attack: Starting at 2nd level, if a gangster can catch an opponent who is unable to defend himself effectively, he can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Any time the gangster's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to Defense, the gangster can make a sneak attack (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not). The gangster also can sneak attack any opponent he flanks. Sneak attacks deal extra damage as noted on the table above.

Table 2-3: The Gangster

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Score
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Weapon proficiencies, infamy	+3	0
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Sneak attack +1d6	+4	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Call in a favor	+4	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Underworld contact	+4	+1
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +2d6	+5	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Call in a favor	+5	+1
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Underworld contact	+6	—
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Sneak attack +3d6	+6	+1
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Call in a favor	+6	—
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Crippling Strike	+7	+1
11th	+8	+3	+7	+3	Sneak attack +4d6	+7	—
12th	+9	+4	+8	+4	Call in a favor	+8	+1
13th	+9	+4	+8	+4	Underworld contact	+8	—
14th	+10	+4	+9	+4	Sneak attack +5d6	+8	+1
15th	+11	+5	+9	+5	Call in a favor	+9	—
16th	+12	+5	+10	+5	Opportunist	+9	+1
17th	+12	+5	+10	+5	Sneak attack +6d6	+10	—
18th	+13	+6	+11	+6	Call in a favor	+10	+1
19th	+14	+6	+11	+6	Underworld contact	+10	—
20th	+15	+6	+12	+6	Sneak attack +7d6	+11	+1

Ranged attacks only count as sneak attacks if the target is within 30 feet. The gangster can't strike a vital area accurately beyond that range. Only targets with discernable anatomies are vulnerable to sneak attacks. In the Pulp Era, this is nearly everyone, but some strange ooze creatures and other horrid monsters may be immune to gangsters' sneak attacks.

Call in a Favor: The gangster meets a lot of people—criminal and otherwise—and it's inevitable that some will "owe him one." Some gangsters maintain that favors, not money, are the true currency of the underworld. There's an element of truth to that statement; some crimelords would cheat each other out of illicit profits without a second thought but would blanch at reneging on an owed favor.

At 3rd level and every third level thereafter, the gangster has the ability to call in such a favor, calling on resources he otherwise wouldn't have access to. Among the possible uses for a favor are information (either because a Gather Information check failed or the gangster doesn't have time to make one), money, or equipment (equivalent to a single windfall; see Chapter 6: Equipment and money for windfall rules). The gangster can accumulate multiple favors if he or she doesn't use ones previously gained. The gangster can hold up to five unused favors; a sixth one isn't gained until one is spent.

Use of a favor is negotiated with the GM to ensure it's not abusive to rules or disruptive to the game. The GM should allow reasonable latitude, however, as the favor is an important class feature for gangsters.

Underworld Contact: At 4th level, 7th level, 13th level, and 19th level, the gangster develops a strong connection to an underworld figure of some importance. As long as the contact is treated well, the contact is completely loyal to the gangster and will place his livelihood—but not his life—at risk if asked. The underworld contact has a Helpful attitude toward the character (See Chapter 3: Skills for NPC attitudes).

Usually a contact is a member of the underworld, but it's possible to have a cop on the take as contact or a girlfriend who works in City Hall's records division. Other possible underworld contacts include black marketeers, bootleggers, captains of organized crime families, illicit gunsmiths, safecrackers, forgers, and higher-ups in any crime syndicate.

Crippling Strike: At 10th level, the gangster gains the ability to attack opponents with such precision that his blows weaken them. Whenever the gangster damages a foe with a sneak attack, that character also takes 1 point of temporary Strength damage. Ability points so lost return on their own at the rate of 1 point per day.

Opportunist: Once per round, a gangster of 16th level or higher can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as the gangster's attack of opportunity for that round. Even a gangster with the Combat Reflexes feat can't use the opportunist class feature more than once a round.

Martial Artist

The Far East is a place of mystery, and somehow the martial artist character has learned some of its deadliest secrets. Some martial artists are natives of China, Japan, or other exotic locales who have found their way West seeking adventure. Others are Westerners adopted at an early age or otherwise immersed in the world of kung-fu and other Eastern fighting styles.

Most ordinary citizens don't understand martial arts and consider their use strange and even unfair. The ascetic lifestyle that many martial artists adopt further isolates them from "normal" society. So many martial artist characters live wandering lifestyles, moving from town to town. Some search only for a peaceful place to meditate and practice, but find themselves embroiled in conflicts against their will. Others are obsessed with revenge or have other, less serene motivations. And some simply seek adventure for adventure itself—because the master of the martial arts is the master of any situation.

Hand-to-hand combat is where martial artists excel—eventually their empty hands and bare feet are more deadly than a knife or a gun. But their constant training makes them adept at any athletic activity, and their ability to dodge, tumble, and weave away from threats makes them difficult targets in a fight. Finally, their mastery of certain meditative principles gives them abilities possible only for those who spend years in isolation and training.

Game Rule Information

Martial artists have the following game statistics.

Abilities: All three physical attributes—Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution—are important to martial artists. A high Wisdom score gives them the insight needed to make their meditations fruitful.

Vitality: 1d8 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills: The martial artist's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Far East) (Int), Profession (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the martial artist.

Unarmed Strike: Martial artists are highly trained in fighting with nothing more than their hands and feet as weapons. They deal more damage than normal, as seen on the above table. Martial artists automatically gain the benefit of the Improved Unarmed Strike feat and thus do not provoke attacks of opportunity when they strike foes with their fists and feet.

Martial artists can deliver a flurry of blows with a full attack action. When doing so, the martial artist can make one extra attack per round, but each attack, including the extra one, suffers a –2 penalty to the attack roll. The extra attack is made at the martial artist's highest attack bonus.

The unarmed strikes of the martial artist ordinarily deal normal damage. A martial artist who scores a critical hit on a foe can do double Vitality Point damage rather than dealing Wound Point damage to his foe. (Martial artists sometimes do this if they want to knock out their foes rather than seriously hurting them.)

Weapon Proficiencies: The martial artist begins play with the following feats: Weapon Proficiency (simple) and Exotic Weapon Proficiency (any one exotic melee or thrown weapon).

Evasion: A 2nd-level or higher martial artist can avoid even unusual attacks with great agility. If a martial artist succeeds at a Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save (such as a grenade attack), the martial artist instead takes no damage.

At 11th level, the martial artist hones this ability further, taking no damage on a successful Reflex saving throw and half damage on a failed save.

Stunning Attack: At 3rd level, a martial artist has the ability to stun a foe damaged by an unarmed strike. Such a stunning attack is usable once per round, no more than once per level per day.

The martial artist must declare the stunning attack before making the attack roll. If the attack succeeds, the target must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + one-half the martial artist's level) or be stunned for 1 round. Stunned characters can't act and lose any Dexterity bonus to Defense, and attackers get a +2 bonus to attacks against them. Regardless of whether the saving throw is successful or not, the unarmed strike still does normal damage.

Still Mind: By 4th level, the martial artist gains a +2 bonus to Will saving throws against mind-influencing powers and devices. Fear, charm, and domination effects are just some of the mind-influencing powers against which still mind provides some protection.

Table 2-4: The Martial Artist

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Score	Unarmed Damage
1st	+0	+1	+1	+1	Unarmed strike, weapon proficiencies	+4	0	1d6
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+2	Evasion	+5	—	1d6
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+2	Stunning attack	+5	+1	1d6
4th	+3	+2	+2	+2	Still mind	+6	—	1d8
5th	+3	+3	+3	+3	Slow fall 20 ft.	+6	—	1d8
6th	+4	+3	+3	+3	Leap of the clouds	+7	+1	1d8
7th	+5	+4	+4	+4	Slow fall 30 ft.	+7	—	1d8
8th	+6	+4	+4	+4	Improved Trip	+8	—	1d10
9th	+6	+4	+4	+4	Slow fall 50 ft.	+8	+1	1d10
10th	+7	+5	+5	+5	—	+9	—	1d10
11th	+8	+5	+5	+5	Improved evasion	+9	—	1d10
12th	+9	+6	+6	+6	—	+10	+1	1d12
13th	+9	+6	+6	+6	Wholeness of body	+10	—	1d12
14th	+10	+6	+6	+6	Diamond body	+11	—	1d12
15th	+11	+7	+7	+7	—	+11	+1	1d12
16th	+12	+7	+7	+7	Abundant step	+12	—	1d20
17th	+12	+8	+8	+8	Defensive roll	+12	—	1d20
18th	+13	+8	+8	+8	Slow fall (any distance)	+13	+1	1d20
19th	+14	+8	+8	+8	Quivering palm	+13	—	1d20
20th	+15	+9	+9	+9	Damage reduction 10/—	+14	—	1d20

Slow Fall: The 5th-level or higher martial artist can fall uncanny distances if within arm's reach of a wall. By using the wall to slow her descent, the martial artist takes damage as if the fall were 20 feet shorter than it actually is (taking no damage from falls of 25 feet or less). The martial artist's slow fall ability improves according to the table above until 18th level, when the martial artist can fall any distance without taking damage.

Leap of the Clouds: At 6th level, the martial artist's jumping distance is not limited according to her height. Furthermore, the martial artist gains a +10 bonus to Jump checks.

Improved Trip: The martial artist gains the Improved Trip feat for free at 8th level.

Wholeness of Body: At 13th level, the martial artist can cure twice her current class level in lost vitality points each day. She can divide this healing among multiple uses.

Diamond Body: A 14th-level or higher martial artist is immune to poison and disease of all kinds.

Abundant Step: At 16th level, the martial artist can slip mystically between spaces, as per the *dimension door* discovery, once per day. The martial artist has an effective scientist level of one-half his martial artist level for purposes of this class feature.

Defensive Roll: A 17th-level or higher martial artist can roll with a potentially lethal blow and survive unscathed. Once per day, when a martial artist would be reduced to 0 wound points or less by damage in combat, the martial artist can roll with the damage, taking only half damage on a successful Reflex saving throw (DC = damage dealt). The martial artist must be aware of the attack and in a position to somehow avoid it (not tied up, stunned, or unconscious, for example). If the martial artist is in a situation that would deny him his Dexterity bonus to Defense, he can't use his defensive roll class feature.

Quivering Palm: At 19th level, the martial artist can set up lethal vibrations within an enemy once per week. The martial artist begins by announcing a quivering palm attempt prior to making an attack roll. If the attack roll succeeds and the target takes damage, the vibrations from the quivering palm begin to take effect. Thereafter the martial artist can attempt to slay his target at any time for a number of days equal to the martial artist's level. When the martial artist wills the target to die (a free action), the target must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + one-half the martial artist's level + the martial artist's Wisdom modifier). If the saving throw succeeds, the target is thereafter safe from that quivering palm attack (although subsequent quivering palm attacks affect the target normally.

Only enemies with discernable anatomies and fewer Hit Dice than the martial artist has levels are vulnerable to quivering palm attacks.

Damage Reduction: At 20th level, the martial artist can shrug off the effects of many attacks. The martial artist gains damage reduction of 10/—. The martial artist ignores the first 10 points of damage from unarmed and weapon attacks (although fire, electricity and other energy attacks affect him normally.

Mystic

Existing on the fringes of society, the mystic turns his back on the technological trappings of the 20th century in exchange for ancient, almost-forgotten powers. Whether he calls his abilities magic, spiritualism, or psychic phenomena, the effect is the same: power the likes of which science has never seen.

Mystics spend so much time pursuing ancient lore that they have little left over to learn many mundane skills. They have little inherent aptitude for combat, but some of their powers can be formidable in a fight. They can turn

invisible, call lightning from the sky, and even fly with the very winds at their command.

For purposes of the *Pulp Heroes* rules, the exact tradition the mystic pursues doesn't matter. Mystic characters accrue mystic points that they can spend to activate their powers. But while the powers work the same in terms of the rules, they might look very different to the characters in the game world. One character might attack her foes by using the power of voodoo and sticking pins into tiny dolls. Another might curse foes by burning a black candle and chanting an incantation, while a third will use psychic power to unlock the pain centers in an enemy's brain. All three techniques work the same way (a mystic power that causes pain to the target), but the three characters would probably contend that their techniques are completely different. Furthermore, they'd probably argue with each other over whose mystic tradition was most potent.

For one reason or another, mystic player characters have left the confines of their magic libraries, alchemical laboratories, and ancient shrines to long-dead gods. Some seek further mystical knowledge, while others are out to confront rivals from their mystical tradition or an opposing one. Finally, some mystics say greater powers from beyond space and time instruct them as they travel the Pulp Era in search of adventure.

Game Rule Information

Mystics have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Wisdom gives mystics the willpower and insight to make connections to mystical power sources. Because they aren't as effective in combat, Constitution and Dexterity help hit points and Defense (as well as the mystic's weaker saves).

Vitality: 1d6 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills: The mystic's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level (2 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Table 2-5: Bonus Mystic Points

	Bonus Mystic Points (by Mystic Level)									
Wis Score	**1-2**	**3-4**	**5-6**	**7-8**	**9-10**	**11-12**	**13-14**	**15-16**	**17-18**	**19-20**
1-9	—	—can't activate mystic powers			—	—	—	—	—	—
10-11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
12-13	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
14-15	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16-17	1	3	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
18-19	1	3	5	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
20-21	3	3	5	7	9	—	—	—	—	—
22-23	3	5	5	7	9	11	—	—	—	—
24-25	3	5	7	7	9	11	13	—	—	—
26-27	3	5	7	9	9	11	13	15	—	—
28-29	5	5	7	9	11	11	13	15	17	—
30-31	5	7	7	9	11	13	13	15	17	19
32-33	5	7	9	9	11	13	15	15	17	19
34-35	5	7	9	11	11	13	15	17	17	19
etc...										

Table 2-6: The Mystic

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Defense Bonus	Reputation Score	Mystic Points	Mystic Powers Known (by level)
1st	+0	+1	+0	+2	+2	0	2	1
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+3	+2	—	3	2
3rd	+1	+2	+1	+3	+3	+1	4	3
4th	+2	+2	+1	+4	+3	—	7	3/1
5th	+2	+3	+1	+4	+3	—	10	4/2
6th	+3	+3	+2	+5	+4	+1	15	4/2/1
7th	+3	+4	+2	+5	+4	—	20	5/3/2
8th	+4	+4	+2	+6	+4	—	27	5/3/2/1
9th	+4	+4	+3	+6	+5	+1	34	6/3/3/2
10th	+5	+5	+3	+7	+5	—	43	6/3/3/2/1
11th	+5	+5	+3	+7	+5	—	52	7/4/3/3/2
12th	+6	+6	+4	+8	+6	+1	63	7/4/3/3/2/1
13th	+6	+6	+4	+8	+6	—	74	8/4/4/3/3/2
14th	+7	+6	+4	+9	+6	—	87	8/4/4/3/3/2/1
15th	+7	+7	+5	+9	+7	+1	100	8/4/4/4/3/3/2
16th	+8	+7	+5	+10	+7	—	115	8/5/4/4/3/3/2/1
17th	+8	+8	+5	+10	+7	—	130	8/5/4/4/4/3/3/2
18th	+9	+8	+6	+11	+8	+1	147	8/5/5/4/4/3/3/2/1
19th	+9	+8	+6	+11	+8	—	164	8/5/5/4/4/4/3/3/2
20th	+10	+9	+6	+12	+8	—	183	8/5/5/5/4/4/3/3/2

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the mystic.

Mystic Powers: Mystic characters can activate their mystic powers by spending mystic points. The mystic has a limited selection of available powers, although with each level the mystic learns new powers according to the table above. Once chosen, the mystic knows that power and can activate at any time, as long as the mystic point cost can be paid. Mystics begin play knowing only one 1st-level power, but they learn another power at 2nd and 3rd level, and they gain access to a 2nd level power when they become 4th-level mystics. A list of mystic powers is available in Chapter 8: Discoveries and Powers.

To activate a certain power, the mystic must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the power's level. The Difficulty Class for saving throws to resist a mystic's power is 10 + the level of the power + the mystic's Wisdom modifier.

Mystics don't need to choose which powers they'll use in advance. As a standard action, they can activate any power they know by paying the mystic point cost of the power. Mystics gain power points every day after meditating or engaging in other mystic preparations for an hour (most mystics do this when they awaken in the morning). Table 2-5 on the opposite page lists how many mystic points a mystic gets per day. Mystics with high Wisdom scores earn bonus mystic points according to the bonus mystic points table. For example, a 5th-level mystic with a Wisdom score of 17 has 19 mystic points per day (a base of 10 for being 5th level plus 9 points [1+3+5] by virtue of his high Wisdom).

Even if they don't spend all their points, mystics can never have more mystic points than the maximum they regain every day.

Weapon Proficiencies: The mystic begins play with the following feat: Weapon Proficiency (simple).

Private Eye

Call them gumshoes, private dicks, detectives, or investigators. But if your wife has been abducted, you believe your business partner is cheating you, or a rare Egyptian scroll is missing from the museum, you'll definitely be calling a private eye if you want to get to the bottom of things. The private eye is surveillance expert, interrogator, forensics scientist, and reluctant guardian angel to anyone who can afford his $50 a day, plus expenses.

Private eyes are at their best at a crime scene, discovering evidence and pondering the meaning of clues. Their analytical nature often results in leads, and their legwork and extensive interpersonal skills get suspects to reveal more than they intend to. And because they deal on a daily basis with the desperate, the crazy, and the criminal, private eyes are no strangers to violence. Most private eyes depend on a firearm to protect themselves and their charges—and to convince a reluctant suspect into confessing.

The typical private eye ekes out a meager existence in a dingy two-room office, barely earning enough to keep the lights on and the receptionist paid. But large security firms or wealthy industrialists employ their own private eyes. And despite the name, particularly good detectives in the police force or FBI probably have levels of private eye.

Whoever their current employer happens to be, most private eyes are driven by the need to know, to find out whodunit even when no one cares—or powerful forces are willing to kill to keep a secret safely buried. This obsession with finding out the truth can put a private eye in a lot of danger. But it leads to innumerable adventures, as each successful case leads to greater and greater mysteries.

Game Rule Information

Private eyes have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Intelligence determines the strengths of a private eye's analytical skills, and a high Charisma score

helps put the innocent at ease and the guilty into a cold sweat. When words turn to gunplay, a high Dexterity keeps the private eye out of harm's way and helps him get the drop on foes with bigger guns than brains.

Vitality: 1d6 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills: The private eye's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (investigation) (Int), Listen (Wis), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (8 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the private eye.

Weapon Proficiencies: The private eye begins play with the following feats: Weapon Proficiency (simple) and Weapon Proficiency (pistols).

Find Clues: The private eye's brain is wired to notice things that are out of place and objects that might be useful to an investigation. A private eye that merely passes within 5 feet of a clue to a crime or other mystery is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if he were actively looking for clues. The private eye practically has a sixth sense about such clues.

Obscure Knowledge: Private eyes' cases often teach them obscure bits of knowledge they'd otherwise never seek out. A private eye can make a special obscure knowledge check with a bonus equal to his level + his Intelligence modifier to see whether he knows anything relevant about people, items, or places. This check won't reveal the identity of a killer, but it might give a hint to his identity. The private eye can't take 10 or take 20 on this check, and the check can only be made once per subject.

The GM can determine the Difficulty Class of the check on the following table:

DC	Type of Knowledge
10	Common, known by at least a substantial minority of the locals. (The mayor's reputation for drinking; folklore about a local haunted house)
20	Uncommon but available; known to only a few locals. (A local priest's shady past; rumors about a powerful corporation.)
25	Obscure; known to only a few people anywhere. (An industrialist's family history; rumors about an ordinary organization.)
30	Extremely obscure; known to very few or forgotten completely. (The history of an ordinary building; why the industrialist's last word was "Rosebud.")

Make Your Own Luck: At 2nd level, the private eye can reroll a failed ability check, skill check, attack, or saving throw once per session. The second result must be used, even if it's worse than the first one.

Call in a Favor: The private eye tackles cases that help people in all walks of life. Inevitably some are satisfied with the private eye's work and offer him a favor to be requested later.

At 3rd level and every fifth level thereafter, the private eye can call in such a favor, calling on resources he otherwise wouldn't have access to. Among the possible uses for a favor are information (either because a Gather Information check failed or the private eye doesn't have time to make one), money, or equipment (equivalent to a single windfall; see Chapter 6: Equipment and Money for windfall rules). The private eye can accumulate multiple favors if he or she doesn't use ones previously gained.

Use of a favor is negotiated with the GM to ensure it's not abusive to rules or disruptive to the game. The GM should allow reasonable latitude, however, as the favor is an important class feature for private eyes.

Bonus Feat: At 4th level and every fourth level thereafter, the private eye earns a bonus feat, which must be

Table 2-7: The Private Eye

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Score
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Weapon proficiency, find clues, obscure knowledge	+3	0
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+2	Make your own luck	+4	+1
3rd	+2	+2	+1	+2	Call in a favor	+4	—
4th	+3	+2	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+1
5th	+3	+3	+1	+3	Adaptive learning	+5	—
6th	+4	+3	+2	+3	—	+5	+1
7th	+5	+4	+2	+4	—	+6	—
8th	+6	+4	+2	+4	Bonus feat, call in a favor	+6	+1
9th	+6	+4	+3	+4	—	+6	—
10th	+7	+5	+3	+5	Adaptive learning	+7	+1
11th	+8	+5	+3	+5	—	+7	—
12th	+9	+6	+4	+6	Bonus feat	+8	+1
13th	+9	+6	+4	+6	Call in a favor	+8	—
14th	+10	+6	+4	+6	—	+8	+1
15th	+11	+7	+5	+7	Adaptive learning	+9	—
16th	+12	+7	+5	+7	Bonus feat	+9	+1
17th	+12	+8	+5	+8	—	+10	—
18th	+13	+8	+6	+8	Call in a favor	+10	+1
19th	+14	+8	+6	+8	—	+10	—
20th	+15	+9	+6	+9	Bonus feat	+11	+1

selected from the following list: Alertness, Dodge, Expertise, Heroic Surge, Neck Hairs Rise, Persuasive, Quick Draw, Sex Appeal, Sharp-Eyed, Skill Emphasis, Stealthy, Steely Gaze, and Trustworthy.

Adaptive Learning: At 5th level, 10th level, and 15th level, the private eye can designate any one cross-class skill as a class skill. The GM is free to rule that a specific skill is off-limits for this class feature.

Scientist

In the Pulp Era, science isn't the ultraspecialized set of disciplines we know today. There's no barrier between pure science and applied research—every scientist is an inventor, and every inventor a scientist. The lines between different branches of science, such as physics, chemistry, and biology—are fuzzy, and it's possible for a single scientist to contribute groundbreaking research in multiple fields.

While ordinary citizens of the Pulp Era use typical early 20th century technology in their daily lives, scientist characters are pushing the envelope and inventing things the real world won't see for a hundred years or more. Scientists fly from place to place with personal jetpacks, confront their foes with lightning pistols, and build rejuvenation chambers to heal the sick and wounded. Less altruistic scientists build nega-bombs that threaten entire cities, giant robots to defend their volcano lairs, and heavily armored drilling machines to that threaten to destroy the very center of the earth.

With each level they attain, Scientist characters make more and more discoveries, which they can build into inventions. A scientist character who makes the discovery of lightning projection, for example, can build that discovery into a lightning projector he can carry around with him on his adventures. As he advances in levels, he can improve his invention so it's pistol-sized or simplify the controls so anyone can use it. Or if he'd rather, he can move on to new discoveries and new inventions.

Scientists are also fonts of technical knowledge, absorbing volumes of information through reading, research, and consultations with their peers. Most are poor combatants (although anyone with a lightning projector is to be feared), and their studies leave them little time to pick up other skills.

Moreso than any other class, scientists tend to be reluctant adventurers, preferring to remain sequestered in their laboratories and workshops. But rare substances, hard-to-get raw materials, or the chance to make a new discovery are powerful lures to get a scientist out into the Pulp Era world. And once they've had an adventure or two under their belts, many scientists find that "field-testing" their inventions and keeping the world safe for scientific progress make the peril of pulp adventures worthwhile.

Game Rule Information

Soldiers have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Intelligence rules the day for the scientist, while Wisdom plays a role in the occasional breakthrough. Scientists fight poorly and have fewer vitality points than any other character class, so a good Constitution score helps shore up that weakness.

Vitality: 1d4 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills: The scientist's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (Int), Repair (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Treat Injury (Int), and Use Invention (Int). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the scientist.

Discoveries Made: The table above lists how many discoveries a scientist has made at each level. Like mystic powers, discoveries come in nine levels, and a 1st-level scientist has only made one 1st-level discovery, which he chooses from among those listed in Chapter 8: Powers and Discoveries. At each successive level, the scientist makes further discoveries, both among levels he already knows and eventually higher-level discoveries.

But discoveries are just theories that work on paper. To put them into action and make them usable in the game, the scientist must build inventions that incorporate his discoveries. To do so, the scientist expends (discovery level x scientist level x 30) XP and devotes (discovery level x scientist level x 5) days in a proper laboratory or workshop to the task. Rich characters need only spend (discovery level x scientist level x 4) days, wealthy characters spend (discovery level x scientist level x 3) days, and billionaire characters spend (discovery level x scientist level x 2) days. Scientists can have philanthopists, corporations, or other organizations foot the bill for their inventions, but such groups will seek a return on their investment one way or another.

Scientist characters can further reduce the cost of their inventions by voluntarily lowering their scientist level for purposes of the equations above (although doing so may make the invention function to a lesser degree). Scientists can't voluntarily lower their level below the minimum scientist level necessary to make the discovery.

Once the time and XP have been spent, the invention is fully operational. It'll function for 50 uses before something goes wrong—it short-circuits, its power core needs replacing, or its crystal targeters shatter, for example. The Extend Invention feat lets characters create inventions that don't wear out or break down.

In general, only the scientist can operate his inventions—the high-tech equipment of the Pulp Era requires delicate adjustments and complicated controls to function properly. Scientists with the Simplify Invention feat can construct inventions for other characters (see the feat description for details), and characters with the Use Invention skill can puzzle out how a particular scientist's invention works. Scientists don't need to have the Use Invention skill to operate their own invention, but it's often useful when borrowing the invention of a colleague (or a rival).

Inventions tend to be somewhat bulky, weighing 10 pounds per level of the discovery. Held, carried, or worn inventions typically take up two body slots, chosen from the following list: head, eyes, back, torso, forearms, left hand, right hand, belt, cape, legs, boots. The lightning projector mentioned above, for example, might be a gun connected with a series of cables to a large battery backpack—the right hand and back body slots.

The GM is the arbiter of which body slots are reasonable for each invention. It would take a pretty unusual justification for a lightning projector that took up the legs and boots body slots, for example. Characters can reduce the size of their inventions by taking the Miniature Invention feat.

Weapon Proficiencies: The scientist begins play with the following feats: Weapon Proficiency (simple) and Weapon Proficiency (pistols).

Bonus Feat: At every fifth level, the scientist gains a feat for free, which must be chosen from the following list: Durable Invention, Extend Invention, Improvised Invention, Mass-Produce Invention, Miniature Invention, Profession (any), Simplified Invention, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge) (any), Skill Emphasis (Repair), or Skill Emphasis (Treat Injury).

Table 2-8: The Scientist

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Defense	Reputation Bonus	Score	Discoveries Made (By Level)
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Weapon proficiencies	+2	0	1
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	—	+2	+1	2
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	—	+3	—	3
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	—	+3	+1	3/1
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	+3	—	4/2
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+4	+1	4/2/1
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	—	+4	—	5/3/2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	—	+4	+1	5/3/2/1
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	—	+5	—	5/4/3/2
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Bonus feat	+5	+1	5/4/3/2/1
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7	—	+5	—	5/5/4/3/2
12th	+6	+4	+4	+8	—	+6	+1	5/5/4/3/2/1
13th	+6	+4	+4	+8	—	+6	—	5/5/4/4/3/2
14th	+7	+4	+4	+9	—	+6	+1	5/5/4/4/3/2/1
15th	+7	+5	+5	+9	Bonus feat	+7	—	5/5/4/4/4/3/2
16th	+8	+5	+5	+10	—	+7	+1	5/5/4/4/4/3/2/1
17th	+8	+5	+5	+10	—	+7	—	5/5/4/4/4/3/3/2
18th	+9	+6	+6	+11	—	+8	+1	5/5/4/4/4/3/3/2/1
19th	+9	+6	+6	+11	—	+8	—	5/5/4/4/4/3/3/3/2
20th	+10	+6	+6	+12	Bonus feat	+8	+1	5/5/4/4/4/3/3/3/3

Soldier

The soldier class includes the daring pilots and hardened GIs common to pulp fiction. They can be expert marksmen, aces of the wartorn skies, or grizzled veterans tough enough to face any menace. In the heat of combat is where they do their best work, and their military prowess is unparalleled.

Most soldiers are good with guns, and many hone their skills by specializing in signature weapons. They can also take more punishment than any other character class in the game. Only the best soldiers are known by their reputations, however, and most soldiers spend so much time in combat training that they don't pick up a lot of other skills.

Other soldiers are pilots, where their keen reflexes and fearless nature makes them at home in the cockpit of fighter planes—and sometimes more exotic flying craft. More rarely, soldiers specialize in wheeled or aquatic vehicles.

Soldier characters aren't necessarily active members of the armed forces, although they can be. It's just as common for them to be veterans of the Great War (World War I, although they don't call it that yet) or other conflicts from the early part of the 20th century. And characters trained for battle by shadowy, secret organizations are considered soldiers as well. Organized crime families employ thugs and enforcers who often have levels in the soldier class. Whether such characters call themselves veterans, officers, mercenaries, or hired muscle, they're all considered soldiers.

Game Rule Information

Soldiers have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Whether they're blazing away with a pistol in each hand or dive-bombing with a top-secret fighter plane, soldiers benefit from high Dexterity. Because they spend a lot of time in combat, Constitution and Dexterity are important as well. Those soldiers who are successful military officers tend to have high Charisma as well.

Vitality: 1d10 plus Constitution modifier per level.

Class Skills: The soldier's class skills, and the key ability for each of them, are as follows: Craft (Int), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Int), Repair (Int), Treat Injury (Wis). See Chapter 3: Skills for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the soldier.

Weapon Proficiencies: The soldier begins play with the following feats: Weapon Proficiency (simple); Weapon Proficiency (pistols); Weapon Proficiency (rifles); and Weapon Proficiency (melee).

Bonus Feats: At 1st level and every even-numbered level thereafter, the soldier gets a bonus feat. The bonus feats are in addition to the feats earned at every third level, but they must be chosen from the following list: Ambidexterity, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Expertise, Far Shot, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Reload, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Control, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Quick Reload, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Speed Demon, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus, Weapon Proficiency (simple), Weapon Proficiency (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (melee), Weapon Proficiency (rifles), Weapon Proficiency (big guns), and Whirlwind Attack.

Table 2-9: The Soldier

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Defense	Special Bonus	Reputation Score
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Weapon Proficiencies, bonus feat	+3	0
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Bonus feat	+4	—
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	—	+4	+1
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+4	—
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	—	+5	—
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+5	+1
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	—	+6	—
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+6	—
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	—	+6	+1
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+7	—
11th	+11	+7	+3	+3	—	+7	—
12th	+12	+8	+4	+4	Bonus feat	+8	+1
13th	+13	+8	+4	+4	—	+8	—
14th	+14	+9	+4	+4	Bonus feat	+8	—
15th	+15	+9	+5	+5	—	+9	+1
16th	+16	+10	+5	+5	Bonus feat	+9	—
17th	+17	+10	+5	+5	—	+10	—
18th	+18	+11	+6	+6	Bonus feat	+10	+1
19th	+19	+11	+6	+6	—	+10	—
20th	+20	+12	+6	+6	Bonus feat	+11	—

Weapon Specialization: On achieving 4th level or higher, the soldier can take Weapon Specialization, a feat restricted to all but soldiers. Weapon Specialization adds a +2 damage bonus with a chosen weapon. The soldier must have Weapon Focus with a particular weapon before taking the Weapon Specialization feat with it. If the weapon is a ranged weapon, the damage bonus applies only if the target is within 30 feet. The soldier can take Weapon Specialization as a bonus feat or as a regular one.

Signature Weapon: On achieving 8th level or higher, the soldier can take the Signature Weapon feat, which is restricted to all but soldiers. The soldier must choose a specific model of weapon (like a Colt .45 rather than just a revolver or a Marine K-Bar knife rather than just any knife) and must have Weapon Specialization with that weapon. When wielding that specific type of weapon, the soldier gets an additional +2 bonus to attack and +1 to damage. Combined with the prerequisite Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization feats, Signature Weapon provides a total bonus of +3 to both attack and damage.

Real Adventurer's Clothing Supply

Whips, fedora hats, leather flight jackets and more. Outfit yourself for the adventures of a lifetime. The next time you are travelling to a far away land to search ancient temples or burial grounds be prepared with the best gear that money can buy! Write for catalog today. Dept 21, Jones, Indiana.

LOYAL MINIONS
the profession that pays

Have you dreamt of a job where your loyal servitude is appreciated? Do you wish to be outfitted in the very best uniforms that can be devised? Do you dream of an employer solely devoted to advancement, no matter what the cost? Then do not delay! There is no time to lose. Write to Dr. D.F. Trenton, Dept E-VL, New Brunswick, NJ.

Chapter 3
A Thousand SKILLS, A Thousand Kills

~By Karl Hammerton~

Author of ".45 Ways to Die," "Kill Me Again and Again," Etc.

Skills in Pulp Heroes work just like they do in any other ***d20 System*** *game: Take your ranks in a skill, add the relevant ability modifier, add the result of a d20 roll, and check the result against a Difficulty Class (DC) set by the GM. If your check result equals or exceeds the DC, you used the skill successfully. If not, you failed (and the GM will tell you about the consequences).*

At 1st level, you're limited to 4 ranks in each skill, although your ability score modifier and perhaps some modifiers from the feats or Origins you selected will improve your final check result. As you earn levels, you'll gain more ranks in skills, and eventually you'll be able to pull off tasks that a 1st-level character would find impossible.

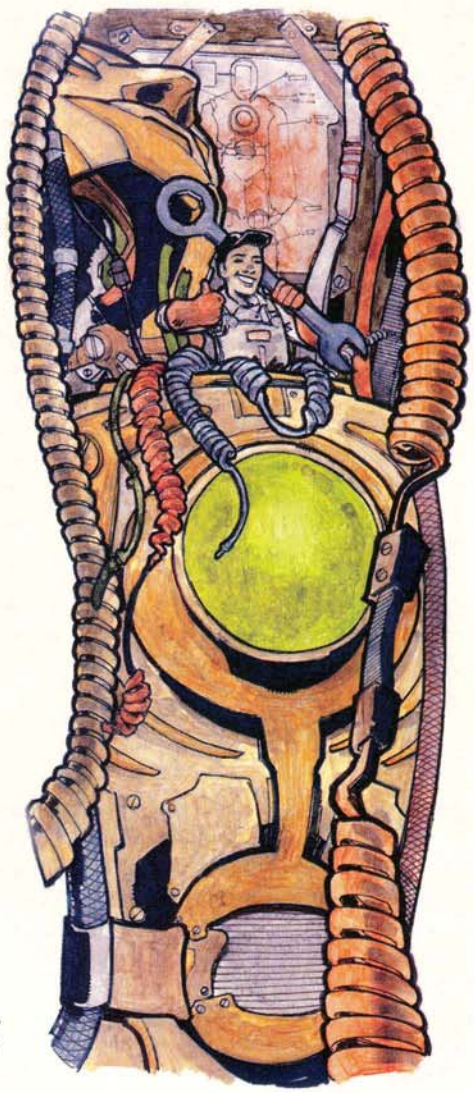
Opposed Checks: Sometimes two characters (usually a player character and a GM-controlled non-player character) will face off in a contest when only one of them can win. This is called an opposed check, and the higher check total wins the contest. For example, say that the Commodore has agreed to a horserace with a rival, Professor Blackiron. The Commodore has a Ride total of +8 (5 ranks in Ride and +3 Dex), and Professor Blackiron has a Ride total of +10: 6 ranks in Ride, +1 Dex, and the Skill Emphasis (Ride) feat. The Commodore rolls an 10, and Blackiron rolls a 9. The Commodore's check total is 18, but Blackiron's check total is 19 and he wins by a nose.

Untrained Checks: Some skills are usable even by characters who don't have any ranks in the skill. Anyone can try to use the Balance skill to walk across a fallen log, for example. If a skill is usable untrained, characters making skill checks simply use the relevant ability modifier, because they have 0 ranks in the skill.

If a skill is usable untrained, the skill description will tell you so.

Skill List

Table 3-1: Skills (on the following page) shows the list of skills available to characters in the *Pulp Heroes* game. If a skill is functionally identical to one found the D&D *Player's Handbook*, its description isn't reprinted here.



Concentration

You are particularly good at focusing your mental efforts despite distraction.

Check: You can make a Concentration check to activate a mystical power despite the pain of a wound, a menacing foe, and so on. You also can use Concentration to maintain your focus while performing other tasks. A successful Concentration check would let you eavesdrop on the Mayor in a crowded restaurant, even as the waiter offers you another scotch.

Table 3-2 (page 39) provides the Difficulty Classes for various kinds of distractions.

Retry: Yes, though a success doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failed check.

Drive

You can drive a car with some degree of prowess.

Check: Just driving from one place to another doesn't require a check. But checks are required during a chase, in hazardous weather, or any time the driver is operating the vehicle beyond what it's intended to do.

The Drive skill also covers trucks and motorcycles. Like cars, they don't require skill checks for ordinary operation, but the Drive skill isn't usable untrained on motorcycles and trucks.

Simple vehicle maneuvers such as tight cornering, swerves, and fast acceleration have a DC of 5. Skidding turns and emergency braking have a DC of 10, bootlegger reverses (a 180-degree skidding turn) have a DC of

Table 3-1: Skills

Skill	Exr	Gng	Mar	Mys	Pri	Sci	Sol	Untrained?	Key Ability
Balance	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	Yes	Dex
Bluff	●	●	x	x	●	x	x	Yes	Cha
Climb	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	Yes	Str
Concentration	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	Yes	Con
Craft	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Yes	Int
Diplomacy	●	●	x	x	●	●	x	Yes	Cha
Disable Device	●	x	x	x	●	●	x	No	Int
Disguise	x	●	x	x	●	x	x	Yes	Cha
Drive	●	●	x	x	●	x	●	Yes	Dex
Escape Artist	x	●	●	x	x	x	x	Yes/No	Dex
Forgery	x	●	x	x	x	x	x	No	Int
Gather Information	●	●	x	x	●	x	x	Yes	Cha
Handle Animal	●	x	x	●	x	x	x	No	Cha
Hide	●	●	x	x	x	x	x	Yes	Dex
Intimidate	x	●	x	x	●	x	●	Yes	Cha
Jump	●	x	●	x	x	x	x	Yes	Str
Knowledge (arcana)	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	No	Int
(underworld)	x	●	x	x	x	x	x	No	Int
(religion)	x	x	x	●	x	x	x	No	Int
(Far East)	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	No	Int
(investigation)	x	x	x	x	●	x	x	No	Int
(any)	●	x	x	x	x	●	x	No	Int
Listen	●	x	x	x	●	x	x	Yes	Wis
Move Silently	●	●	x	x	x	x	x	Yes	Dex
Open Lock	x	●	x	x	●	x	x	No	Dex
Perform	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Yes	Cha
Pilot	●	x	x	x	x	x	●	No	Cha
Profession	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	No	Int
Repair	x	x	x	x	x	●	●	No	Int
Ride	●	x	x	x	x	x	x	Yes	Dex
Search	●	x	x	x	●	x	x	Yes	Int
Sense Motive	●	●	●	●	●	●	x	Yes	Wis
Sleight of Hand	x	●	x	x	x	x	x	No	Dex
Speak Language	●	x	x	x	x	●	x	No	Int
Spot	●	x	x	x	●	x	x	Yes	Wis
Swim	●	x	●	x	x	x	x	Yes	Str
Treat Injury	x	x	x	x	x	●	●	Yes	Int
Tumble	x	x	●	x	x	x	x	No	Dex
Use Invention	x	x	x	x	x	●	x	No	Int
Wilderness Lore	●	x	x	●	x	x	x	Yes	Wis

● Class skill x Cross-class skill

20. Truly amazing maneuvers like pulling a car onto two wheels or jumping over obstacles have DCs of 25 or higher.

Each vehicles' description includes a maneuver modifier that applies to all Drive checks made with the vehicle.

Knowledge

This skill functions just like it does in D&D. But because the *Pulp Heroes* setting is quite different, here are the most common fields of study:

- Arcana (mystic powers, monsters, and Things Man Was Not Meant To Know)
- Europe (the first of several geography-based subskills; see the others below)
- Engineering (how mundane machines work)
- History (both general knowledge and specifics of a region or culture)
- High society (who's who and what's what among the rich and powerful)
- Underworld (customs and practices of the criminal element)
- Religion (both real-world organized religions and various mystery cults)
- Far East (includes China, Japan, India, Southeast Asia, and Pacific Islands)
- Investigation (police procedures, evidence analysis, forensics)
- Developing world (includes Africa, the Middle East, and South America)
- Unknown territories (includes the arctic and antarctic, mysterious sites elsewhere, and underground cavern networks)

Check: Answering a simple question in your field of study has a DC of 10. More difficult questions have DCs of 15 or 20, and doing ground-breaking academic work in your chosen field has a DC of 30.

Table 3-2: Distractions

DC	Distraction
10 + damage dealt + power level	Damage or failed saving throw during the activation of a power, or damage by an attack of opportunity or readied attack made in response to the power being activated.
10 + half of continuous damage last dealt + power level	Suffering continuous damage (such as from acid)
Distracting power's save DC + power level	Distracted by nondamaging power or invention. (If the power or invention allows no save, use the save DC it would have if it did allow a save).
20 + power level	Grappling or pinned.
10 + power level	Vigorous motion (in a swerving car, or belowdecks on a sinking steamer).
15 + power level	Violent motion (galloping horse, or deck of a storm-tossed ship).
5 + power level	High wind, driving rain, or sleet.
10 + power level	Wind-driven hail, dust, or debris.
15 + power level	Activating defensively (so as not to provoke attacks of opportunity)

Retry: No. The roll represents what you know about a particular topic, and a second check automatically returns the same result as the first one.

Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Only common facts can be gleaned from untrained checks.

Pilot

You can fly an airplane, zeppelin, or other flying vehicle.

Check: Just as with the Drive skill, ordinary flying requires no Pilot checks. Flying in combat, around obstacles, or in bad weather, however, does require skill checks.

Simple maneuvers like touch-and-gos and banked turns have a DC of 5. Half-loops and long rolls have a DC of 10, and barrel rolls and full loops have a DC of 15. Landing a plane without power has a DC of 25 (or higher, depending on conditions and altitude).

Flying vehicles have maneuver modifiers that affect all Pilot checks made with the vehicle.

Note that unlike the Drive skill, the Pilot skill is not usable untrained.

Retry: Yes, although landing checks rarely allow retries—for obvious reasons.

Repair

You can repair damaged machines and devices.

Check: Most Repair checks are made to fix complex devices, such as cars, elevators, and assembly lines. The DC is set by the GM. In general, simple repairs have a DC of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex jobs have a DC of 20 or higher and can take hours or days to complete.

Damaged inventions can be repaired as well. Because they use scientific principles beyond the norm for the Pulp Era, the DC is 15 + the power level of the invention.

If you don't have the proper tools for a Repair check, you suffer a -5 penalty. Also, working with alien or incomprehensible technology increases DC by +5.

You can choose to attempt temporary or jury-rigged repairs. This reduces the DC by 5 and cuts the required time in half, but each time the machine is used there is a 10 percent cumulative chance it will break again.

Retry: There are no restrictions against repeated Repair checks. In some specific cases, the GM may decide that a failed Repair check has somehow made matters worse, increasing the DC or the time required for subsequent checks.

Special: If you have 5 or more ranks in an appropriate Craft or Profession skill, you gain a +2 synergy bonus to Repair checks.

Sleight of Hand

You can lift a purse or pick a pocket, palm an unattended object, or perform some feat of legerdemain with an object no larger than a loaf of bread.

Check: A check against DC 10 lets you palm a coin-sized, unattended object. Minor feats of legerdemain, such as pulling a coin out of someone's ear, are also DC 10 unless an observer is determined to figure out how you pulled off the trick.

When performing this skill under close observation, your skill check is opposed by the observer's Spot check. The observer's check doesn't prevent you from performing the action, just from doing it unnoticed.

When you try to take something from another person, your opponent makes a Spot check to detect the attempt. To retrieve the item you must roll a 20 or higher, regardless of the opponent's check result. The opponent detects the attempt if her check result beats your check result, regardless of whether or not you got the item.

You can also use Sleight of Hand to hide a weapon on your person. In general, a Sleight of Hand check to hide a weapon is opposed by someone else's Spot check (if you're being casually observed) or Search check (if you're being frisked). Under these circumstances, a Search check gets a +4 bonus because it's usually not too hard to find a weapon if you're frisking someone. Additional modifiers may also apply to both checks, as given on the following chart.

Sleight of Hand

Modifier	Condition
–4	For each size category of the weapon greater than Small
+4	Tiny weapon
+2	You're wearing a cloak, coat, or other heavy clothing
+4	You have a concealable holster or other pockets/straps that aid in concealment
+6	The weapon is concealed inside something specially designed for this purpose (a sword cane, for example)
–2	You want to be able to draw the weapon normally
–4	You want to be able to draw the weapon as a free action with the Quick Draw feat

Spot/Search Modifier	Condition
–1	Per 10 feet of distance between observer and observed
–5	Spotter distracted

Untrained Concealment Attempts: The Sleight of Hand skill cannot be used untrained. If a character without that skill tries to conceal a weapon, it's no longer an opposed check. Instead, anyone observing the character with the concealed weapon gets a Spot check, and anyone frisking that character gets a Search check. The base DC for each Spot or Search check is 10, and all the above modifiers apply, including those that would normally modify the Sleight of Hand check. Simply change the signs of any applicable Sleight of Hand modifiers listed above and apply them to the base DC of the Search or Spot check instead.

Speak Language

The Speak Language skill doesn't work like a standard skill.

- You start at 1st level knowing how to speak one or more languages by virtue of your Origin (See Chapter 1).
- When you buy a rank in Speak Language, you choose a new language you can speak.
- You never make checks for languages; either you know a language or you don't. To keep matters simple, if you can speak a language, you can also read and write it (if it has a written form).
- Characters ordinarily choose a language from among those available in the real world (English, French, German, etc.) Characters with the Primitive Origin can choose an animal language if they wish. Keep in mind, however, that even in pulp fiction, animals have very limited vocabularies. Your *Pulp Heroes* campaign may also develop other languages, like Krangorese, the tongue of the underground dinosaur-hunters of Krangor.

Variant: Dealing with foreign languages—at the gaming table and in the real world—can be a frustrating experience. If you don't want to use the language rules, assume that everyone speaks the same language. This is a common conceit adopted by many writers of pulp fiction, and it's OK if you do it, too.

Treat Injury

Use this skill to keep a badly wounded eyewitness from dying, to help your fellow soldiers recover faster from wounds, to keep your friend from succumbing to poisons, or to treat a mysterious illness.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task you attempt.

DC	Task
15	First aid
15	Long-term care
Poison DC	Treat poison
Disease DC	Treat illness

First Aid: First aid means stabilizing a dying character (one with no wound points left). A successful check leaves the wounded character with 0 wound points but stable. The check is a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

Long-term Care: Providing long-term care means treating an injured character for a day or more. If you are successful, your patient recovers vitality, wound points, or ability points at twice the normal rate. Patients under long-term care recover 2 vitality points per character level per hour, 2 wound points per day, and 2 points of ability score damage from each ability per day.

You can tend up to six patients at a time. You need modern medical supplies such as bandages and antibiotics—or their herbal equivalents if you're in the wild and succeed at a Profession (herbalist) check (DC 20). You cannot give long-term care to yourself.

Treat Poison: To treat poison means to tend a single character who has been poisoned and is going to take more damage from the poison (or suffer some other effect). Every time the poisoned character makes a saving throw against the poison, you make a Treat Injury check. The poisoned character uses your result in place of her saving throw if your Treat Injury result is higher.

Treat Illness: To treat a disease, mysterious plague, or other illness means to tend a diseased character. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects, you make a Treat Injury check. The diseased character uses your result in place of her saving throw if your Treat Injury result is higher.

Special: If you have 5 or more ranks in Profession (doctor), you get a +2 synergy bonus on Treat Injury checks.

Use Invention

Use this skill to figure out how the inventions of other scientists work.

Check: You can use this skill to activate an invention that you didn't create (you activate your own inventions automatically). By studying the various controls and readouts on the strange invention, you can puzzle out what it does and how it works.

Task	DC
Determine function	10 + power level
Activate invention	15 + power level

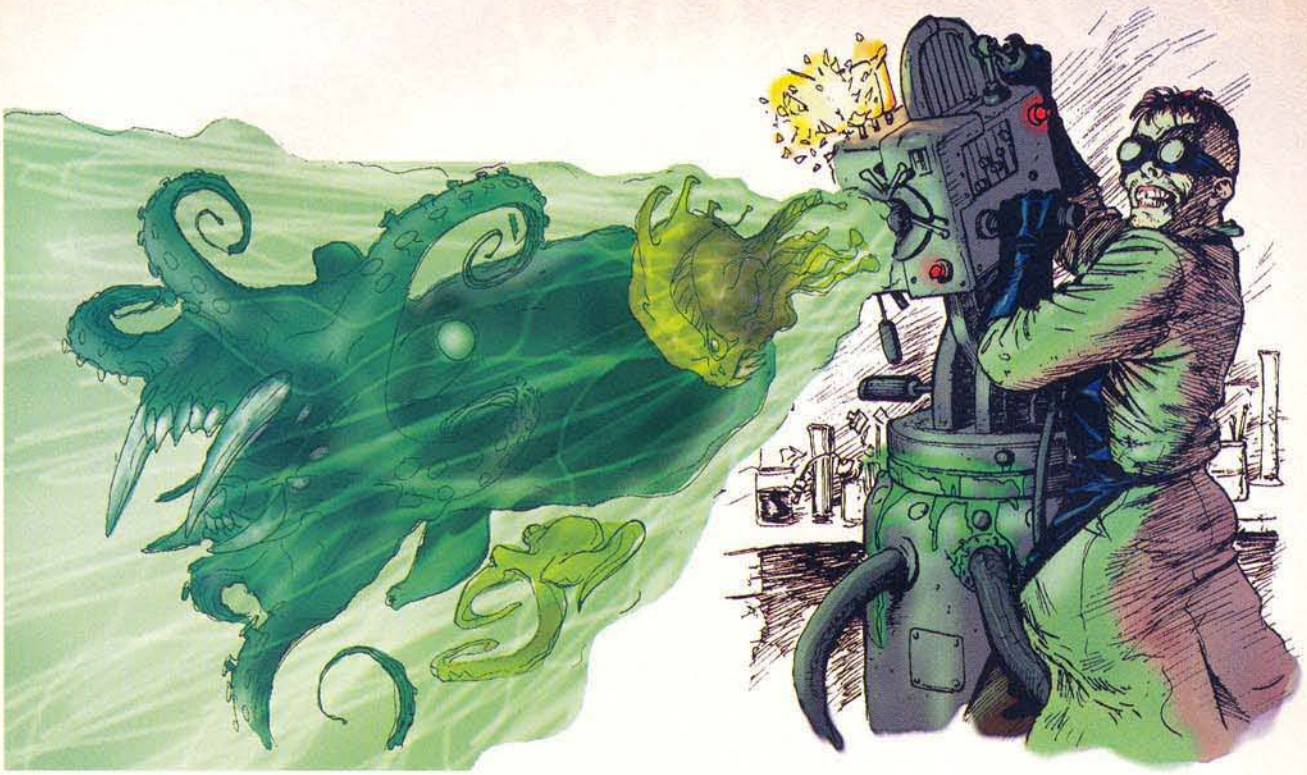
You must make a check each time you use the invention. If you fail by 10 or more, you suffer a mishap. A mishap means that the device activates, but not in the way you (or perhaps even the inventor) intended. The GM determines the result of a mishap. Typical mishaps include the invention targeting the wrong subject or releasing an electrical shock that deals 2d6 points of damage to you.

Retry: Yes, but if you ever roll a natural 1 while attempting to activate an invention and you fail, then you can't try to activate it again for a day.

Wilderness Lore

You can hunt wild game, guide a party safely through the jungle, and avoid natural hazards like avalanches.

Check: You can keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild.



DC	Task
10	Get along in the wild, moving up to one-half your overland speed while hunting and foraging. You provide food and water to one other person for every 2 points by which your check result exceeds 10.
15	Gain +2 on Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to one-half your over land speed, or +4 if stationary. You may grant the same bonus to one other person for every 1 point by which the check result exceeds 15.
20	Avoiding getting lost and triggering natural hazards such as quicksand or avalanches.

The Wilderness Lore skill also allows you to track people and animals in a wilderness setting. (Unlike in D&D, a separate feat isn't required to track). In general, a single check lets you find tracks and follow them for one mile or until they become difficult to follow due to changing terrain, backtracking, or being obscured somehow. When tracking, you move at half your normal speed.

Surface	DC
Very soft	5
Soft	10
Firm	15
Hard	25

Very Soft Ground: This is any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft Ground: This is any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which the creature leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm Ground: Most normal outdoor surfaces (such as lawns, fields, woods, and the like) are considered firm ground. The creature might leave some traces (broken branches, tufts of hair) but leaves only occasional or partial footprints.

Hard Ground: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints at all, such as bare rock, is hard ground. Most streambeds fall into this category, since any footprints left behind are obscured or washed away. The creature leaves only traces (scuff marks, displaced pebbles).

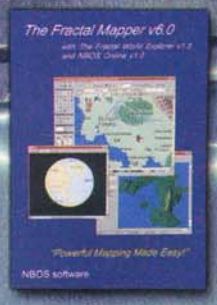
Condition	DC Modifier
Every 3 creatures in the group being tracked	–1
Size of creature or creatures being tracked:*	
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium-size	0
Large	–1
Huge	–2
Gargantuan	–4
Colossal	–8
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain	+1
Fresh snow cover	+10
Poor visibility:*	
Overcast or moonless night	+6
Moonlight	+3
Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked party hides trail (and moves at half speed)	+5

*Apply only the worst modifier from this category.

Retry: If you fail a Wilderness Lore check while tracking, you retry after 1 hour.

RPGNOW.com

Download These Great Titles



Adventures
Software
E-Books

The Roleplaying Games Mall of the Future

www.RPGNOW.com

Chapter 4
FEATS of Daring in the Palace of Peril

~By Sylvia Fox-Renard~

Author of "Death Wears High Heels," "Six Bullets, Seven Madmen," Etc.

A feat represents the little "something extra" that makes your character special. Maybe it's how fast your gat comes out of its shoulder holster. Perhaps it's the look in your eyes that says, "Don't mess with me." And maybe it's the squad of goons with blackjacks that watch your back.

Unlike skills, feats don't have ranks—you either have a feat or you don't. Characters gain one feat at first level, and one feat every third level after that (at 3rd, 6th, 9th, 12th, 15th, and 18th level). Some feats have listed prerequisites (usually an ability score requirement or another feat), which you must have before you select the feat. And if you no longer meet a prerequisite (perhaps because a rare South American poison has sapped your Strength), you lose access to the feat until you meet the prerequisite again.

Many of the feats available in the *Pulp Heroes* game are taken verbatim from D&D. To save space, we won't reprint those here. The complete list of *Pulp Heroes* feats is as follows (italicized feats are described fully in this chapter).

Complete Feature List

Acrobatic, Alertness, Ambidexterity, *Athletic*, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, *Exotic Weapon Proficiency*, Expertise, *Fame*, Far Shot, *Fingers Crossed*, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, *Heroic Surge*, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Unarmed, Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, *Minions*, Mobility, *Neck Hairs Rise*, *Nimble*, *Persuasive*, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, *Precise Control*, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, *Quick Reload*, *Quickness*, Rapid Shot, Run, *Secret Identity*, *Sex Appeal*, *Sharp-Eyed*, Shot on the Run, *Sidekick*, *Signature Discovery*, *Signature Vehicle*, *Signature Weapon* (soldier-only), *Skill Emphasis*, *Speed Demon*, Spring Attack, *Stealthy*, *Steely Gaze*, Stunning Fist, Sunder, *Toughness*, *Trustworthy*, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus, Weapon Proficiency (simple), Weapon Proficiency (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (melee), Weapon Proficiency (rifles), Weapon Proficiency (big guns), Weapon Specialization (soldier-only) and Whirlwind Attack.

Invention Feats: *Miniature Invention*, *Simplified Invention*, *Mass-Produce Invention*, *Improvised Invention*, *Durable Invention*, *Extend Invention*.

Acrobatic

You are very agile.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Jump checks and Tumble checks.

Athletic

You have a knack and training in a variety of sports.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Climb checks and Swim checks.

Exotic Weapon Proficiency

Choose an exotic weapon, such as a cavalry sabre, whip, or throwing knife (see the list of weapons in Chapter 6). You understand how to use that type of weapon in combat.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: If you don't have exotic weapon proficiency in the exotic weapon you're using, you suffer a –4 penalty to attack rolls.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new weapon.

Fame

You are particularly well-known.

Benefit: Gain +3 to your Reputation score.

Fingers Crossed

Even when the situation seems dire, you can find a way to avoid a collision.

Benefit: Once per day, you can reroll any Driving or Pilot check. You must accept the new result, even if it's lower than the original roll.

Heroic Surge

You can perform additional actions in a round.

Benefit: You may take an extra move-equivalent or standard action, either before or after your regular action. You may use Heroic Surge once per day for every four character levels you have attained, but never more than once per round.

Minions

You have access to guards, thugs, or other subordinates who follow your orders.

Prerequisite: 6th level.

Benefit: You attract loyal followers, according to the following table.

Minion Table

Leader Score	Number of followers by level					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1 or less	—	—	—	—	—	—
2-9	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	5	—	—	—	—	—
11	6	—	—	—	—	—
12	8	—	—	—	—	—
13	10	1	—	—	—	—
14	15	1	—	—	—	—
15	20	2	1	—	—	—
16	25	2	1	—	—	—
17	30	3	1	1	—	—
18	35	3	1	1	—	—
19	40	4	2	1	1	—
20	50	5	3	2	1	—
21	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	110	11	6	3	2	1
25+	135	13	7	4	2	2

Leader Score: Your leader score is equal to the sum of your character level, your Reputation score, and your Charisma modifier, modified by the factors listed below:

Leader Attribute	Modifier
Considered fair and generous	+1
Displays special power	+1
Has had well-publicized failure	-1
Considered aloof or cruel	-1
Known for unsurpassed megalomania	+3
Has a secret base	+2
Moves around a lot	-1
Provides uniforms	+1

Minions are generally loyal, but aren't fanatical and won't do anything obviously suicidal. Minions who die or leave the character are replaced with new recruits within a month's time.

Neck Hairs Rise

You have a sixth sense that warns you of danger.

Prerequisite: Wisdom 13+.

Benefit: You can make a Wisdom check (DC 20) to avoid being surprised. A successful check allows you to act during the surprise round, even if you would otherwise be surprised.

Nimble

You have exceptional flexibility and manual dexterity.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Escape Artist checks and Sleight of Hand checks.

Persuasive

You have a way with words and body language.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Bluff checks and Intimidate checks.

Precise Control

You are in your element behind a steering wheel or a control stick.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Drive checks and Pilot checks.

Quick Reload

You can get bullets into an empty gun amazingly fast.

Benefit: You can reload most firearms as a move-equivalent action, and revolvers as a standard action.

Normal: Characters without the Quick Reload feat reload most firearms as standard actions, and revolvers as full-round actions.

Quickness

You are good at turning attacks that might deal damage to you into near misses and glancing blows.

Benefit: You gain +3 vitality points.

Special: You may select this feat multiple times.

Secret Identity

You have two identities: an innocuous private identity for when you want to be unobtrusive, and a public persona for when you want your reputation to work for you.

Benefit: You have two Reputation scores, one for each identity. One identity (you choose which one) takes the Reputation score you've earned subsequent to taking this feat. The other identity has a Reputation score of 0. Most people won't connect your two identities unless confronted with incontrovertible evidence that you're one person with two personae.

Special: If your public persona adopts a distinctive style of dress or moniker, increase your Reputation score by 2. You only get the Reputation increase once, even if you change your public persona's costume or nickname.

Sex Appeal

You are strikingly attractive, which garners you a lot of amorous attention.

Benefit: You receive a +3 bonus to Diplomacy and Bluff checks made to influence NPCs who would normally be attracted to your gender.

Sharp-Eyed

You have an eye for detail.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Search checks and Sense Motive checks.

Sidekick

You have an individual follower of some ability.

Prerequisite: 6th level.

Benefit: Just as with the Minion feat, above, you use your Leader score to determine the exact benefit of this

feat. But rather than receiving a group of low-level NPCs, you receive a single higher-level NPC. Your sidekick must always be at least one level lower than you are, however.

Leader Score	Sidekick Level
1 or less	—
2	1st
3	2nd
4-5	3rd
6	4th
7-8	5th
9	6th
10-11	7th
12	8th
13	9th
14-15	10th
16	11th
17-18	12th
19	13th
20	14th
21-22	15th
23	16th
24+	17th

Leader Score: Your leader score is equal to the sum of your character level, your Reputation score, and your Charisma modifier, modified by the factors listed below:

Leader Attribute	Modifier
Considered fair and generous	+1
Displays special power	+1
Has had well-publicized failure	-1
Considered aloof or cruel	-1
Known for unsurpassed megalomania	+3
Has a secret base	+2
Moves around a lot	-1
Provides uniforms	+1

Just like minions, sidekicks are considered loyal, and they might even sacrifice themselves for their leader if asked. It takes about three months to recruit a new sidekick if the old one dies or leaves.

Signature Discovery

You have advanced theoretical knowledge of a scientific principle. Fortunately, its practical applications find their way into the gizmos and doomsday machines you make.

Prerequisite: 1+ level of scientist.

Benefit: When you gain this feat, choose a discovery from the list in Chapter 8. Whenever you use that discovery in an invention, its save DC is +4 higher than it ordinarily would be.

For example, if you have Signature Discovery (*lightning bolt*) and construct a "lightning turbine gun," anyone caught in the path of the lightning must succeed at a DC 18 Reflex save to take half damage, not a DC 14 Reflex save.

Signature Vehicle

You are most at home at the controls of your favorite vehicle.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+ and either Pilot 6+ or Drive 6+.

Benefit: When you choose this feat, choose a specific model of vehicle (like a Pan Am Clipper or a Duesenberg roadster). The vehicle gains a +2 Dodge bonus to AC.

Signature Weapon [Soldier-Only]

You are so adept at using a particular model of weapon that it's almost a part of you.

Prerequisite: Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization

Benefit: Choose a specific model of weapon (like a Colt .45 or a Damascus-steel rapier). When you're wielding that weapon, you gain a +2 bonus to attack and a +1 bonus to damage. When combined with the prerequisite feats, you have a +3 on attack and damage with the specific model of weapon.

Skill Emphasis

Choose a skill, such as Wilderness Lore. You have a special knack with that skill.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on all skill checks with that skill.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a different skill.

Speed Demon

You have the uncanny ability to squeeze more speed out of the vehicles you control.

Benefit: Any vehicle you control has its maximum speed increased by 10% (round down to the nearest 5 ft. increment).

Stealthy

You are particularly good at avoiding notice.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Hide checks and Move Silently checks.

Steely Gaze

Just looking into your eyes can be a frightening experience.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks, and you can Intimidate as a move-equivalent action.

Normal: Attempts to intimidate are generally full-round actions.

Toughness

You are tougher than normal.

Benefit: You gain +3 wound points.

Special: You may select this feat multiple times.

Trustworthy

You have a friendly demeanor.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to all Diplomacy checks and Gather Information checks.

Weapon Finesse

You are especially skilled at using a certain weapon, one that can benefit as much from Dexterity as from Strength. Choose one weapon from this list: fencing foil, knife, rapier, unarmed strike.

Prerequisite: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +1 or higher.

Benefit: With the selected weapon, you may use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new weapon.

Weapon Proficiency

You are adept at using weapons in combat.

Benefit: Choose a weapon group when you select this feat. You make attack rolls with weapons in this group normally.

Normal: A character that uses a weapon without being proficient with it suffers a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times, each time you take the feat, it applies to a different weapon group.

You cannot take exotic weapons as a weapon group; instead, you must select the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to gain proficiency with a specific exotic weapon.

Invention Feats

Invention feats function somewhat like D&D's metamagic feats in that they allow greater effect by artificially raising the base power level. By applying an invention feat to a discovery, you increase the level of the discovery (making the invention you're building more expensive), but you gain the benefit listed in the feat.

Miniature Invention

You are adept at making compact, portable inventions.

Benefit: Your inventions only take up one body slot, chosen from the following list: head, eyes, back, torso, forearms, left hand, right hand, belt, cape, legs, boots. The level of the discovery used in the invention increases by +1.

Normal: Inventions take up two body slots. For example, a "mesmero-helm" incorporating the *charm person* discovery might take up both the eyes and head body slots.

Simplified Invention

While most inventions are a morass of dials, buttons, and readouts, yours have simple controls that anyone can use.

Benefit: Other characters can use your inventions. The level of the discovery used in the invention increases by +2.

Normal: Only the inventor and characters who succeed at a Use Invention check can operate an invention.

Mass-Produce Invention

Your inventions can be duplicated assembly-line style.

Prerequisite: Wealthy resource rating

Benefit: Once you've built a prototype (using the normal invention rules), copies of your invention can be mass-produced at any factory or other production facility. You can easily afford to construct such a facility yourself, and the copies don't cost you XP. The level of the discovery used in the invention increases by +4. The GM can set reasonable limits on how many copies your assembly line can construct and how fast the production process is.

Normal: Inventions are too complex to be built using mass-production techniques. Each copy must be constructed using the invention rules (so each one costs its creator XP).

Improvised Invention

You can construct inventions using discoveries you don't completely understand.

Benefit: You can construct an invention using a discovery you don't have. You must already have one discovery at that level to improvise an invention, so you can't choose a discovery beyond the levels you have access to. The level of the discovery used in the invention increases by +2.

Normal: If you don't have the discovery, you can't build an invention that uses it.

Extend Invention

Your inventions don't wear out.

Benefit: You can use your invention an unlimited number of times. The level of the discovery used in the invention increases by +3.

Normal: Inventions wear out and become nonfunctional after 50 uses.

BRAND NEW TEAR GAS FOUNTAIN PEN

Fast Selling Sensation! Everyone buys this harmless, modern device which provides positive protection against criminals, morons, vicious dogs, etc. A one minute demonstration brings orders from motorists, police departments, banks, stores, and all classes of business. It's Easy To Sell as high as two dozen daily.

LARGE MARGIN OF PROFIT enables you to make up to $400.00 per month. You take orders and collect your pay every day. Write Now for exclusive territory.

ATLAS CO., CHESTERFIELD STATION DEPT 812, CHICAGO

GOV'T SURPLUS ROCKETPACKS
ORIGINAL PARTS — HIGHEST QUALITY

Do you DREAM of the life of a gentleman ROCKETEER? Then by all means, take quick and fruitful advantage of these surplus gov't rocket packs. Mothballed after testing, these rocketpacks are of the finest quality construction and materials. Order today and we will include FREE a copy of Dr. Nathaniel Merriweathers' Operation of Rocket Packs for Civilian Flight and Travel and an asbestos-lined rocketerring flight suit. Write to Rocketpacks, BOX 8820, Washington, D.C.

Chapter 5
Into the PULP ERA
~By Marko Savage~

Author of "Margin of Terror," "The Hangmen of Manhattan," Etc.

If you've seen the Indiana Jones movies or heard and old radio broadcast of The Shadow, you have a good idea of what the Pulp Era is like. It's an exaggerated version of America in the first half of the 20th Century; it shines brighter and has darker shadows than its real-world counterpart. In the Pulp Era, scientists aren't specialized thinkers who publish papers in academic journals. They're square-jawed inventors who volunteer to test their own rocket-packs because "until I'm sure it works, it's too dangerous to put in the hands of a pilot."

In the Pulp Era, the future holds limitless promise. Furthermore, this bright future is just around the corner. Inventors' workshops are littered with prototypes for space rockets, flying cars, healing "energon" rays, and giant attack robots. But not all the inventors work for the forces of freedom and liberty. Sinister secret societies and tyrant nations have scientists of their own, and their death lasers and nega-bombs are also rolling off the assembly lines. In the Pulp Era, science is both promising and threatening.

Things are much the same on the street. In addition to police patrols, vigilantes stalk the streets of the city, protecting innocents from thugs and criminals. But the underworld is more frightening than its real-world counterpart: the mob isn't necessarily shy about allying with occult groups, foreign spies, or other Pulp Era dangers.

If you're able to capture one thing in your *Pulp Heroes* game, it should be the conflict between a bright future and a dark one in a world that's otherwise similar to our own. Some of the following trappings of the genre will help set the mood for adventures in the Pulp Era.

Who You Are

You can tell a lot about any roleplaying character by providing a one-sentence answer to the question: "Who are you?" The obvious answer isn't very helpful; you don't learn much from the answer "I'm a Cosmopolitan 5th-level private eye." But if you say, "I'm Nora Carter, a two-bit gumshoe in a one-horse town," you're getting somewhere.

Consider developing a distinctive style of dress or speech for your character. Other games have obvious species and equipment differences to help you tell one character from another, but those differences are less pronounced in *Pulp Heroes*. You've got to make yourself stand out from the crowd; you've got no pointy ears and plate-mail armor to do it for you.

Distinctive Traits by Origin and Class

Many of the game's Origins and classes were born in the stereotypes of a half-century of pulp fiction. As a player, you can embrace these stereotypes, twist them a little, or play against them.

All-American: The stereotypical All-American uses a lot of "Gee Whiz!" and "Golly!" slang that sounds dated to our modern ears. All-Americans are patriotic, of course, and some even look down on "foreign" things. Dress is casual, but remember that casual in the 1930s often meant slacks and a dress shirt. Some distinctive traits you might develop would be your omnipresent Chicago Cubs cap, your insistence on clean, white, T-shirts, and your penchant to begin every opinion with, "Well, Momma always said..."

Aristocrat: Even in America, class divisions were sharp during the Pulp Era. Many aristocratic characters take pains to point out their background. Your college tie or pendant indicates that you went to all the right schools, and you might name-drop the places you've been and people you've met. Aristocratic characters are fond of saying "I was boxing champ at Yale, dear fellow," or "I haven't been this dressed up since I had tea with the Queen." You can afford to dress impeccably; for female characters in particular, you have access to one stunning gown after another.

Cloistered: The idea behind the Cloistered origin is isolation from the modern world that everyone else takes for granted. Ordinary things might puzzle or fascinate you. Cloistered characters might garble common phrases ("This is as easy as a cake is!") or ask seemingly obvious questions ("Why do these jazz musicians seem to be making it up as they go along?"). Your clothing might appear out-of-date, foreign, or otherwise unfashionable.

Cosmopolitan: You've done it all and seen it all, so you might share the tendency of the Aristocrat to name-drop. But your reveries are of exotic locales, not a series of parlors and ballrooms. "This reminds me of the time we were hunting the white rhino in Rhodesia," you might say. If you speak multiple languages, it's likely that you sprinkle your dialogue with exclamations and brief expressions in other tongues. You might have an exotic accessory or two among your clothing, such as a shark-tooth necklace given to you by Polynesian islanders.

On The Run: Other origins have all sorts of verbal and visual eccentricities, but you expend every effort to blend in. You try your hardest to dress like everyone else, talk like everyone else, and act like everyone else. While other characters are always themselves, you're always adapting to those around you. If anything, you're a little taciturn, and perhaps your body language is a little shifty or nervous.

Primitive: Your garb is either that of your native land or a weird mix of American garb and clothing from a far-off place. Like a Cloistered character, you may have some trouble with the language—not enough to make communication difficult, but enough quirks, grammar mistakes, and maybe monosyllabic grunts to make it clear that you're not from around here. The conventions of polite society are probably lost on you, so have fun being baffled by dessert forks, calling cards, and the voluntary wearing of neckties.

Explorer: Explorers like gear: compasses, knives, maps, tools, rope, and so on. (Especially rope. No explorer ever said: "I love my gear, but I have all this rope I never use.") A bull whip wouldn't be out of line, either. Explorers tend to be obsessed with the goals of their expedition, which sometimes drives their companions crazy. Explorers like having plans, and they'll generally pause and think when confronted with an obstacle rather than bull their way through. In your spare time, you probably read other explorers' reports and pore over maps, planning your next journey.

Gangster: Reputation is key to a gangster character. The word on the street is sometimes the most important currency of all, and gangsters are always sure to make sure everyone knows that they're tough, ruthless, and not to be messed with. Showing that you have money helps build that reputation, so gangsters tend to dress well if unimaginatively. They're generally hostile to authority figures (especially uniformed police), but unstintingly loyal to true friends and members of their mob crew. Setting up new "deals" occupies a lot of your time, and you're probably a regular at several bars and restaurants frequented by the mob.

Martial Artist: Loose-fitting clothing is the rule here. Perhaps you wear a brocaded Chinese jacket, or maybe you're a boxer who takes great care to roll up his shirt-cuffs before starting a fight. You'll probably name-drop your techniques as you use them, whether it's the "quivering crane strike" or "my two fists, hammer and anvil." You probably spend time each day training (and meditating, if you've adopted a discipline from the Far East).

Mystic: You probably have some item of clothing, subtle or obvious, that identifies you and your mystic tradition. It might be a lapel-pin identifying you as part of the Order of the Scarlet Dawn, or it could be dozens of bone-and-feather fetishes that connect you to various animal spirits. You take enough pride in your powers that you'll announce them as you use them, although exactly how they work is a secret you'll never divulge. You might revel in your mystic heritage, using your powers to intimidate and unnerve those around you. When you're not adventuring, you study and meditate according to the tenets of your tradition.

Private Eye: Of course you have a trenchcoat and fedora, and of course you have a flask of hooch in your top drawer. You've got a wisecrack for every occasion, you tend to be blunt, and you remain at arm's length from both polite society and the underworld. You take a lot of punches, but you deliver your fair share as well. Yours is a lonely profession that's always face-to-face with the worst in human nature, so you probably don't spend your spare time in the company of others. Of all the character classes in *Pulp Heroes*, the private eye has the deepest vein of stereotype. The degree to which you embrace this stereotype is up to you.

Table 5-1: One Hundred Quirks, Calling Cards, and Distinctive Traits

If you're stuck for something to make your character stand out, roll or choose from the following table.

1 ever-present trenchcoat
2 lucky fedora
3 albino
4 always whispers
5 unusual scar
6 completely bald
7 eyes are different colors
8 unusual jewelry
9 wears boutonniere
10 hides tools, weapons, etc. in secret pockets
11 flips a coin
12 shuffles playing cards
13 obsessed with chess
14 always craving a stiff drink
15 smokes cigarettes
16 smokes a pipe
17 smokes cigars
18 wears gloves
19 has strange tattoos
20 chases skirts/man-hungry
21 ostentatious pinky ring
22 European accent (pick a language)
23 African accent (pick a language)
24 Asian accent (pick a language)
25 South American accent (pick a language)
26 obsessed with jazz music
27 obsessed with classical music
28 obsessed with sports (in general, or pick one)
29 obsessed with a particular food
30 reads dime novels
31 goatee
32 van dyke beard
33 rolled mustache
34 eye patch
35 unusually bad or good teeth
36 snaps fingers when nervous
37 lisps
38 limps slightly
39 hands out/leaves business cards everywhere
40 leaves a mysterious item (playing card, flower, etc.) behind
41 loves to dance
42 hums tunelessly
43 whistles
44 plays harmonica or other small instrument
45 shaky hands
46 strokes chin or beard reflexively
47 stammers
48 has New York/East Coast accent
49 has Southern accent
50 has Midwest accent
51 has Western "cowboy" accent
52 rarely blinks
53 reflexively tidies up area
54 reflexively messes up area
55 wears domino mask
56 covers face with bandanna
57 frequently disguised
58 wears long cloak or cape
59 has walking stick or cane
60 frequently overdressed
61 frequently underdressed
62 on the wagon
63 sing-song voice
64 unusually deep voice
65 monotone voice
66 raspy voice
67 unusually smooth or wrinkled skin
68 always wears a particular color
69 clothes always dirty
70 clothes rarely seem to get dirty
71 unusual pleasant scent around character
72 unusual unpleasant odor around character
73 fidgets with string or other item
74 makes languid hand gestures when speaking
75 unusually tense body language
76 tilts head at odd angle
77 always smiling
78 never smiling
79 flirts with receptionists, wait staff, etc.
80 afraid of heights
81 animal phobia (snakes, spiders, etc.)
82 has exotic pets
83 obsessed with fine art
84 frequently sniffles or spits
85 employs signature catch-phrase
86 interrupts other characters
87 eyes have unusual shade
88 missing finger, ear, or minor body part (no game effect)
89 gruff, raspy voice
90 unusual laugh
91 speaks rapidly or slowly
92 favors particular material (silver, gold, etc.)
93 drinks lots of coffee or tea
94 birthmark
95 obsessed with gambling
96 serious collector (coins, art, baseball cards, etc.)
97 religious/pious
98 sexist/prejudiced
99 swears/curses frequently
100 jokester

Scientist: Your research is what matters to you, and that obsession spills over into other aspects of your life. You spend little effort on clothing, although you might have a long white lab coat, and your social life is probably curtailed by your time in the lab. Give some thought to whose lab you use. Unless you're independently wealthy, you probably have a university, military installation, government agency, or corporation that funds your research. Even your time away from the lab is science-related; you'll be reading research papers, sketching ideas on graph paper, and slowly, patiently trying to explain what you consider "simple concepts" to the non-scientists around you.

Soldier: Discipline has been the axis around which your whole life has revolved for years. You probably maintain an orderly appearance and demeanor by force of habit, unless you're truly disillusioned with military life. Your speech patterns may be short and clipped—you're used to giving and receiving orders. You lavish as much attention on your weapons and gear as you do the people in your life, because your gun has saved your life more than any person ever could.

Other Genre Conventions

The Witty Quip: Even if you're measuring time in six-second rounds and everyone is theoretically deaf from nearby gunfire, always give the characters as much time as they need to crack wise. With the exception of a few taciturn heroes, Pulp Era protagonists are a talkative bunch. The dialogue can range from basic "take that, villain!" to the more acerbic wordplay featured in many detective stories.

The Confession: If there's one thing pulp villains share, it's the pathological need to be understood. Accordingly, the Pulp Era sees the rise of one of the oldest villain cliches: The confession/explanation of the villain's plan.

If a villainous mastermind is at a standoff with the player characters (or has them at her mercy), she'll take the time to explain why she built the earthquake-causing tunnel-rockets and just how they've been precisely targeted to split California from the rest of North America. "As long as the emerald focusing array remains intact, nothing can stop them!" she'll exclaim.

Class Distinctions Matter: In the first half of the 20th Century, upper-class Americans were a much more

Table 5-2: Naming Inventions

Roll 1d8 and consult the following list. Then roll 1d20 multiple times to generate your invention's name.

1	Catalyst I	Function I			
2	Catalyst I	Catalyst II	Function I		
3	Catalyst I	Prefix	Function I		
4	Prefix	Catalyst II	Function II		
5	Catalyst I	Prefix	Function I	Function II	
6	Catalyst I	Catalyst II	Function I	Prefix	Function II
7	Catalyst I	Catalyst II	Function I	Function II	
8	Catalyst I	Prefix	Catalyst II	Function I	Function II

	Prefix	Catalyst I	Catalyst II	Function I	Function II
1	Incini-	Gaussian	wave	converter	gun
2	Nova-	zortillium	particle	transformer	sphere
3	Auto-	mu-particle	beam	launcher	unit
4	Micro-	microwave	field	spectralyzer	machine
5	Neo-	infrared	alloy	capacitor	array
6	Aero-	ultraviolet	vector	reflector	rocket
7	Cryo-	full-spectrum	plasma	focus	compound
8	Nega-	polarity	pulse	enhancer	antenna
9	Multi-	dark matter	radiation	charger	engine
10	Electro-	positron	flux	targeter	drive
11	Hydro-	gamma-ray	reaction	emitter	network
12	Infini-	neutron	vapor	transmitter	weapon
13	Magneto-	electron	element	transporter	probe
14	Omni-	atomic	molecule	energy	robot
15	Porta-	Kirlian	atom	matter	craft
16	Mega-	jet	spectrum	prismator	bomb
17	Uni-	martellium	phase	reactor	suit
18	Hyper-	space	laser	reverser	armor
19	Nano-	inertial	ray	negator	shield
20	Anti-	quantum	force	neutralizer	construct

stratified social set than they are today. Rich families intermarried, went to the same schools, belonged to the same clubs, and saw each other socially. Everyone in America knew the names of the richest families: Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, and so on. The ultra-rich in the Pulp Era are in many ways like a European noble class, and they act like it. They'll turn up their nose at "nouveau riche" and affect European accents and interests themselves.

The American Dream is alive and kicking, of course, and it's possible for today's immigrant to be tomorrow's industrialist. But more often, today's immigrant hopes for a middle-class existence for his children, who in turn hope to send their children to private school. Perhaps a wealthy industrialist will emerge after a few generations. But the working-class man knows his place in society, just as the wealthy revel in theirs.

Racial prejudice, sexism, and religious intolerance were more accepted in the pulp fiction of the time than they are today. Women didn't get the right to vote in America until 1920 and Jim Crow laws legalized unfair treatment of blacks in the South. Army units were still segregated. But especially in sports and music, integration was beginning. Racial issues are as important today as they were in the Pulp Era, so consider carefully whether you want to deal with real-world issues at the gaming table.

Booze and Drugs: Many pulp characters had an almost limitless ability to consume alcohol. Especially in lofty social circles and urban settings, booze was everywhere during the Pulp Era, and many characters always had a glass of something in one hand and a cigarette in the other. Even during the Prohibition Era in America (1920–1933), booze was readily available at speakeasies and private parties to those "in the know."

Unless you have a specific reason to give booze importance in your game, it's probably easiest to treat alcohol as just a prop. Let characters drink as much as they like and don't penalize them. Simply say, "you wake up grumpy with a hangover," and get on with the adventure.

Narcotics and other "hard" drugs are treated very differently. In pulp fiction, drugs are strictly the province of the bad guys. Even protagonist gangsters won't touch the stuff or participate in its sale. "Junkies" are depicted with equal parts pity and revulsion, and drug users are almost invariably cautionary tales about the dangers of addiction.

Total Nonsense Science: One Doc Savage tale explained that his personal airplane traveled at almost 300 miles an hour because it used "turbines." Never mind that any real scientist in the 1930s could have explained that a turbine is pretty much just a rotary engine—it's a completely ordinary word to them. But to the reader, "turbines" meant science.

In your own games, feel free to make up scientific terms and apply them to your inventions, vehicles, and other props. Don't be constrained by real science. Go ahead and call your new gun the "zortillium wave infinilyzer" despite the fact that a) there's no such thing as zortillium; b) it obviously sends out explosive shells, not waves; and c) with fifty shots, there's nothing infinite about it.

If you need the name for an invention quickly, consult Table 5-2.

Chapter 6
The Deadliest EQUIPMENT MONEY Can Buy

~By Archibald McKill~

Author of "Money on the Bed, Dame on the Floor," "Black Magic in a Green Beret," Etc.

From a detective's .38 Special to the "flying clippers" of the South Seas pilot and mansions of the ultra-wealthy, the right gear is an important part of any pulp character's arsenal. Below you'll find essential equipment for your Pulp Heroes game. It's just a starting point—so many goods and services are available in 20th century America that a complete equipment list is impossible. This chapter provides details for some of the most common items that characters may need on their adventures. Beyond that, we've provided a simple, abstract money system so it's easy to figure out other items on your own.

Money

Rather than track every dollar earned and spent by pulp characters, the *Pulp Heroes* game assigns each character a resource rating. This rating represents how much disposable income and liquid assets they have on an ongoing basis. There are seven resource ratings:

Destitute: You eke out a meager subsistence. This level includes everyone from hunter-gatherer tribes to the truly desperate poor in large cities.

Poor: Employment is irregular and pays poorly, but you've got a leaky roof over your head and food to eat most days. Panhandlers, hobos, and the urban poor fall into this resource rating.

Working Class: You've got a steady job on the assembly line, out in the fields, or other physical or menial labor. Your residence is small and spartan, but it's reasonably safe and warm.

Middle Class: Skilled tradesmen and lower-level professionals like teachers and bookkeepers have this resource rating. This includes a nice apartment (in the city) or a house in suburban and rural areas.

Rich: You're rising through the ranks of the business world, or you're a white-collar professional like a doctor or professor. You have your own brownstone, penthouse apartment, or a spacious house.

Wealthy: You have so much disposable income that only luxuries can make a significant dent in it. You're almost certainly a leader in your field, whether you're an industrialist, patent-holding scientist, mob leader, or member of the nobility.

Billionaire: Your name is synonymous with wealth. There's almost nothing in the Pulp Era that you can't afford.

Once you know your resource rating, purchasing equipment is simple. Just look at the resource on the good or service; if it's your resource rating or a lower one, you can purchase it.

Windfalls

In the course of play, your character might get a lucrative surveillance contract from an heiress, earn a big reward for apprehending bank robbers, or "find" a stash of Nazi gold bullion. In such situations, the GM awards you a windfall, which you'll record on your character sheet.

Whenever you want, you can spend a windfall to make a single purchase (or a group of related purchases) as if you had the next-higher resource rating. Your actual resource rating doesn't change; you get to pretend that you're one rating higher for one shopping trip.

For example, a Middle Class private eye character rescues a kidnapped child for a grateful (and wealthy) family, thus earning a windfall. The character can make a single purchase at the Rich resource rating, opting for a luxury sedan. The private eye still has a Middle Class resource rating, but drives from case to case in a 1931 Duesenberg.

If you save your windfalls rather than spending them, you can eventually change your resource rating. When you have five windfalls, trade them in and move yourself up to the next highest resource rating.

The windfall system works in reverse, too. Characters can "cash out" their existing resources. They get five windfalls at their current resource rating, but then they move down to the next lowest level. For example, a rich character who cashes out gets five windfalls at the Rich level (so she can make five purchases at the Wealthy level), but then she's spent her small fortune and has a new resource rating of Middle Class

Table 6-1: Weapon

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Crit.	Range Inc.	Wt.	Type	Prof.	Size	Ammo
Baseball bat	Destitute	1d6	20	—	3	B	Simple	M	—
Bayonet	Poor	1d6	19+	—	2.5*	P	Simple	L**	—
Cavalry sabre	Middle Class	1d6	18+	—	3	S	Exotic	M	—
Club/nightstick	Destitute	2d4	20	—	1.5	B	Simple	M	—
Crossbow	Working Class	1d8	19+	80	6	P	Primitive	S	—
Dart	Destitute	1d4	20	20	.5	P	Primitive	S	—
Fencing foil	Middle Class	1d4	18+	—	2.5	P	Exotic	L	—
Greatsword	Rich	2d6	19+	—	15	S	Exotic	L	—
Kama	Working Class	1d6	20	—	2	S	Exotic	S	—
Katana	Rich	1d10	19+	—	10	S	Exotic	M	—
Knife	Poor	1d4	19+	—	1	P	Simple	T	—
Longbow	Poor	1d8	20	100	3	P	Primitive	L	—
Nunchaku	Working Class	1d6	20	—	2	B	Exotic	S	—
Rapier	Middle Class	1d6	18+	—	3	P	Exotic	M	—
Sap	Poor	1d6 subdual	20	—	3	B	Simple	S	—
Shortbow	Poor	1d6	20	70	2	P	Primitive	M	—
Spear	Destitute	1d8	19+	20	5	P	Primitive	L	—
Switchblade	Poor	1d3	19+	—	.5	P	Simple	T	—
Throwing Knife	Poor	1d4	19+	10	.5	P	Exotic	T	—
Whip	Working Class	1d2 subdual	20	15	2	S	Exotic	S	—
Wood Axe/ Fire Axe	Poor	1d8	20	—	6	S	Simple	M	—
Firearms									
Revolver	Working Class	3d8	20	20	2	P	Pistol	S	6
Light pistol	Working Class	3d4	20	20	2	P	Pistol	T	8
Heavy pistol	Middle Class	3d6	20	20	3	P	Pistol	S	8
Submachine gun	Rich	3d6	19+	30	5	P	Rifle	M	30
Rifle	Middle Class	3d8	19+	175	9	P	Rifle	L	5
Shotgun	Working Class	3d10	19+	50	9	P	Rifle	L	5
Machine gun	Rich	3d8	19+	175	250	p	Big Guns	L	175

* Plus weight of rifle
** When mounted

The advantages to the resource rating system are threefold: it cuts out a lot of the paperwork that can get in the way of getting on with the adventure. It gives characters a reasonable amount of disposable income without spending a lot of time detailing how, where, and when they earn it. And when you're creating a new item for your game, you don't need to figure out how much it costs. You just have to decide who could purchase it without unduly tapping their financial resources.

Combining Wealth

Because the truly rich have exponentially more money than the middle and working classes, it's hard to spend above your means by passing the hat and having multiple people contribute to a purchase. If four characters combine their funds to make a purchase, they can buy an item as if they collectively had a resource rating one higher than that of the lowest member of the group. (This means that combining funds only makes sense if everyone has the same resource rating. If you're already rich, the fact that three of your middle-class friends pooled their funds for you isn't meaningful.)

Richer characters can help poorer characters by simply purchasing equipment for them using the usual rules or giving them windfalls as gifts. This sort of thing happens all the time in pulp fiction, and the economy of the game is loose enough that gift-giving isn't unbalancing.

Use this same technique if characters want to pool their windfalls. Four windfalls of a given resource rating are equal to a single windfall of the next higher resource rating. And it rarely matters, but you can divide a windfall to get four smaller ones if you like.

Weapons

The Pulp Era is a dangerous place, with a thousand enemies mundane and fantastic to confront the characters. The following weapons follow the rules outlined in Chapter 7: Combat. If a weapon has a simple description and functions like any other weapon, it's not described separately below.

Note that the statistics for these weapons model how they work in the Pulp Era, which has much more forgiving physics than the real one. They aren't intended to be realistic portrayals of their real-life counterparts, because the *Pulp Heroes* game isn't modeling reality. It's mimicking the weapons the way they work in pulp fiction.

Bayonet: This is essentially a knife mounted on the end of a rifle. If a character detaches the bayonet from the rifle, then uses it in combat, use the knife statistics.

Crossbow: A crossbow requires two hands to use effectively, even though it's Small size. You suffer a –4

penalty if you fire it with one hand. Loading a crossbow requires both hands and a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Fencing Foil: You can use the Weapon Finesse feat (see Chapter 4: Feats) to apply your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attacks with a fencing foil.

Longbow: You need at least two hands to use a bow, regardless of its size. Characters cannot use this bow while mounted, seated in a vehicle, or prone.

Rapier: You can use the Weapon Finesse feat (see Chapter 4: Feats) to apply your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attacks with a fencing foil.

Sap: A sap can't deal wound point damage, only vitality point damage. On a successful critical hit, the sap deals double vitality point damage.

Shortbow: You need at least two hands to use a bow, regardless of its size. Characters can use this bow while mounted, but cannot use it while prone.

Spear: If you use a ready action to set this weapon against a charge, you deal double damage if you score a hit against a charging character.

Throwing Knife: This weapon is balanced for throwing, but is usable in melee as well. You only need the exotic weapon proficiency to use it as a ranged weapon; if you have Weapon Proficiency (simple) you can use it in melee without penalty.

Whip: A whip can't deal wound point damage, only vitality point damage. On a successful critical hit, the whip deals double vitality point damage. It deals no damage to any creature with at least a +3 natural armor bonus. Although you keep it in hand, treat the whip as a projectile weapon with a maximum range of 15 feet and no range penalties.

Because the whip can wrap around an enemy's leg or other limb, you can make trip attacks with it. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the whip to avoid being tripped.

When using a whip, you get a +2 bonus on your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to keep from being disarmed if you fail to disarm your opponent).

Revolver: Typical handguns in this class include the .38 Special, .44 Magnum, and Colt .45 "Peacemaker." Reloading such a weapon requires a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Light Pistol: The Walther PPK and Beretta M1915 are examples of this firearm. Reloading a light pistol requires a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Heavy Pistol: The Colt .45 Automatic and Mauser M1896 pistol are considered heavy pistols. Reloading them requires a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Submachine Gun: A relatively recent innovation, the Thompson M1921 "Tommy Gun" is the best example of this firearm. In addition to firing single shots, the submachine gun has an autofire setting. As a full-round action, you can take two extra attacks at your highest base attack bonus with the submachine gun on autofire. But each attack (the extra ones and the normal ones) suffers a –6 penalty. Reloading a submachine gun is a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Rifle: This category of firearm includes everything from sporting rifles like the Winchester M1895 and military models like the M1898 Mauser, Lee-Enfield, and (late in the Pulp Era) M1 Garand. Reloading a rifle is a move-equivalent action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Shotgun: Classic Pulp Era shotguns include the Remington Model 11A and the Winchester M1897, which appeared during the Great War as a "trench gun" variant. Reloading a shotgun requires a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Vehicles

Vehicles are obviously for getting from place to place, but they're also important elements in the chase scenes that form an important part of pulp adventures. And in the right hands, they can even be weapons.

Note: Speeds are given first in miles per hour, then in feet per six-second combat round.

Jalopy: The jalopy provides one-half cover to its occupants.

Motorcycle: The motorcycle provides one-quarter cover to its occupants.

Flying Clipper: Large seaplanes like the Boeing 314, Martin 130, and Sikorsky S 14 were the workhorses of the dawning field of commercial aviation. "China Clippers" (a generic name that technically only applied to the first Martin 130) could carry 46 passengers on shorter routes and 18 passengers on overnight transoceanic flights.

Table 6-2: Vehicles

Vehicle	New Cost	Used Cost	Size	AC	Hardness	WP	Rst'd Speed	Typical Speed	Open Speed	Top Speed
Jalopy	Working Class	Poor	L	11 (-1 size, +2 armor)	4	20	25/35	30/45	45/65	60/90
Roadster	Rich	Middle Class	L	12 (-1 size, +3 armor)	5	30	25/35	50/70	80/120	120/180
Sedan	Middle Class	Working Class	L	12 (-1 size, +3 armor)	5	40	25/35	45/65	70/100	100/140
Luxury Sedan	Rich	Middle Class	L	12 (-1 size, +3 armor)	5	45	25/35	45/65	70/100	110/160
Limousine	Wealthy	Rich	H	12 (-2 size, +4 armor)	5	60	20/30	40/60	70/100	90/130
Motorcycle	Middle Class	Working Class	M	12 (+2 armor)	3	15	35/50	50/70	80/120	120/180
Small truck	Rich	Middle Class	H	11 (-2 size, +3 armor)	5	80	20/30	45/65	60/90	80/115
Large truck	Rich	Middle Class	G	10 (-4 size, +4 armor)	5	150	20/30	45/65	60/90	80/115
Trainer biplane	Rich	Rich	H	10 (-2 size, +2 armor)	4	70	50/70	70/100	120/180	140/200
Combat biplane	Wealthy	Rich	H	11 (-2 size, +3 armor)	5	90	60/90	80/120	130	150/210
Flying clipper	Wealthy	Rich	G	10 (-4 size, +4 armor)	5	140	50/70	70/100	160/240	180/270

The Official Dungeons & Dragons® Magazine

DRAGON®

Creature Codex:
How the Monsters Live

Bestiary:
Wicked New Creatures

Arcane Lore:
Powerful New Spells

Class Acts:
Awesome New Prestige Classes

NEW Weapons and Equipment

To Order Call:
1-800-395-7760

Order Online At:
www.wizards.com

dragon@pcspublink.com

Prices Change August 1st

DRAGON®

☐ 1 year - Only $37.95
(only $43.95 US dollars in Canada!)

☐ 2 years - Only $68.00
(only $77.95 US dollars in Canada!)

☐ 3 years - Only $99.00
(only $105.95 US dollars in Canada!)

☐ Check Enclosed
(US funds only)

☐ Bill Me

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ Country _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Phone _____ Email _____

ADM089

Mail to: P.O. Box 469107, Escondido, CA 92046-9683

Chapter 7

Johnny's COMBAT Aces in: Chasing the Sky Wraith

~By Dirk Chambers~

Author of "Zarek's Past Revealed!", "Hammersmith's Final Verdict," Etc.

Combat in *Pulp Heroes* follows the rules in the D&D *Player's Handbook*, with the following exceptions:

Vitality and Wound Points

Rather than a single pool of hit points as in D&D, you have two sets of points: vitality (where damage represents fatigue, minor injuries, and your luck running out) and wounds (where damage represents physical trauma like bleeding wounds and broken bones). You determine your vitality points just like you figure out D&D hit points, based on level, class, and Constitution modifier. But your wound points simply equal your Constitution. Unless your Constitution score changes, your wound points won't go up, no matter how many levels you attain.

Most damage is taken from vitality points first. When you've run out of vitality points, the remainder is taken from wound points. You're considered fatigued, so you can't run or charge and you suffer a -2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. In addition, you must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10) or be stunned for 2d6 rounds. When your wound points reach 0, you're unconscious and at death's door. You make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10) to avoid dying on the spot. Every hour thereafter, you make another Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1 per hour of unconsciousness) to avoid dying. If you succeed by 10 or more, or if you roll a natural 20 on this check, you've stabilized and no longer need to roll. You can also be stabilized by someone with the Treat Injury skill.

Critical Hits: Unlike D&D, in which weapons do extra damage on a critical hit, *Pulp Heroes* has critical hits that do the same damage as regular hits. But rather than applying the damage to vitality points, it's

applied to wound points, even if vitality points remain.

Recovery: It takes 8 hours of complete rest to no longer be fatigued. You naturally recover 1 vitality point per character level per hour of rest, and 1 wound point per day of rest. Hospitalization doubles this rate.

Attacks of Opportunity

All the same ways of provoking an attack of opportunity from D&D still work in *Pulp Heroes*. If you move through an opponent's threatened square, pull something out of a backpack, or make a *coup de grace* attack, you might provoke an attack of opportunity.

But there are some new wrinkles to better reflect the gritty feel of a *Pulp Heroes* alley-fight.

Threatening with Unarmed Attacks: All characters threaten the 5 feet around them with their unarmed attacks, even if they aren't martial artists. This change better reflects how important fistfights, wrestling, and other unarmed combat is to the genre. If the Nazi guard raises his rifle next to you, you can make an opportunity attack and perhaps knock it out of his hands.

Pistols and Opportunity Attacks: A key advantage of pistols is that they're easy to aim in close quarters and short ranges. If you're using a pistol or revolver, you don't provoke an attack of opportunity for firing it within a foe's reach. Larger ranged weapons, such as rifles and bows, still provoke attacks of opportunity normally.

Readying Actions Outside Combat

Unlike the standard D&D rules, characters can ready actions before combat begins if they like. This represents the pulp standby of the detective "getting the drop" on the thugs, then being surprised by the evil doctor with a gun behind the curtain, who in turn hears the click of the dame's revolver from the back room. Everyone's talking, everyone's guns are drawn, but the fight hasn't started.

In game terms, the detective has a readied action to shoot the thugs if they go for their gats, the doctor has a readied action to shoot the detective if he fires at the thugs, and the

dame has a readied action to shoot anyone who fires a gun or says something mean to her.

There are limits on how long you can hold a readied action outside of combat. A minute is a good rule of thumb, and if you need a more exact rule, let characters hold readied actions for a number of rounds equal to their Wisdom score. After that time has elapsed, characters are still focused on holding their readied action, but they'll have to take the action at their normal turn in the initiative order.

Chases

Chase scenes, whether they're a car race through the rain-slick streets of downtown or a desperate effort to avoid Kergillian flying wings in your specially-modified biplane, are a crucial part of the pulp genre. But what makes a good chase sequence?

Speed Parity: Horse vs. biplane races are over before they start, for example. A good chase sequence has all the parties capable of more or less the same speed. Note that driver or pilot skill can make up for a shortcoming in the vehicle itself. An expert driver in a small truck might very well be able to keep up with a novice driver in a roadster anywhere but the open highway.

Terrain also can even out vehicle speeds. Even a slow zeppelin might be able to keep up with a racing motorcycle if the motorcycle has to deal with urban traffic and obstacles that the zeppelin simply floats overhead.

Varied Obstacles: The terrain of the chase suddenly becomes more difficult, or the elderly fruit cart vendor starts to cross the street right in front of the chase. If you watch a classic movie chase scene, you'll notice that the surroundings change with great rapidity. Drivers have to deal with new obstacles and dangers every few seconds in the movie, so try to throw a new element into your chases every round.

How to Run a Chase

These rules intentionally take liberties with the initiative sequence and the tactical nature of D&D to better model fights and chases among fast-moving vehicles. The "I move, then you move" conceit strains credulity when applied to vehicles moving 200 feet or more in a single round.

Before the chase sequence begins, set the distance between the vehicles and their initial speeds. This will depend a lot on the initial situation, obviously. The vehicles might be starting from a complete stop, or a limousine being shadowed might have noticed its pursuers and be trying to lose them.

To give your chase a fast-paced feel, forget about mapping the area in traditional D&D fashion. Chases are necessarily more abstract, and they cover enough ground that the GM would be redrawing the map completely every round.

Next, inform the characters of the prevailing terrain type (restricted, typical, or open) for that round and query each driver or pilot about what speed he'd like the vehicle to travel that round.

Finally, introduce a chase feature (see below).

Now characters act in initiative order. Passengers can do whatever they like (fire a gun out the window, tend to their comrades' wounds, try to defuse a bomb). When you reach the driver or pilot's point in the initiative order, the driver or pilot must devote at least some effort to maneuvering the vehicle. He'll choose a speed that the vehicle will travel next round.

Each vehicle has four speeds: restricted, typical, open, and top. If the driver or pilot picks a speed less than or equal to the matching terrain type, no Pilot or Drive check is required to change speeds. For example, a roadster driving in city traffic can travel at up to 35 feet per round without requiring the driver to make a Drive check.

You can try to go faster, of course—that's what chases are all about. You can increase your speed beyond the matching terrain type up to the limit for the next highest terrain type by succeeding at a Drive or Pilot check (DC 15). The roadster in the example above can weave through the city streets at up to 70 feet per round (the maximum for typical terrain) with a successful DC 15 Drive check.

Traveling two categories faster (up to the open terrain maximum in restricted terrain, or up to top speed in typical terrain) requires a DC 30 Drive or Pilot check. Traveling three categories faster (top speed in restricted terrain) requires a DC 45 Drive or Pilot check.

Terrain Types

When you're in a chase, three things set limits on how fast you can go: The top speed of your vehicle, your skill as a driver or pilot, and the prevailing terrain around you.

Pulp Heroes defines three different terrain types: restricted, typical, and open.

For automobiles and other ground vehicles, **restricted terrain** includes downtown, urban driving, heavy traffic on the highway, and winding mountain roads. Restricted terrain for flying vehicles is uncommon for obvious reasons, but barnstorming, flying through winding canyons, or flying in outrageously bad weather would all be considered restricted terrain.

Typical terrain includes uncrowded city streets, unpaved but well-traveled country roads, and moderate traffic. Flying over mountainous or urban terrain is typical as well.

Open terrain is an uncrowded highway or an otherwise empty racetrack. Almost all aerial activity takes place in open terrain.

Consequences of Failure

If you don't succeed at your Drive or Pilot check, keep track of how much you failed by. Then consult the following table.

Check failed by	Result
1-4	Forced brake. Rather than increase speed, an obstacle forces you to slow down. During the next round, the vehicle slows down into the next lowest category, 15 feet slower than the maximum. For example, a roadster traveling at a speed of 60 feet per round (typical) slows down to 20 feet per round (maximum restricted speed of 35 - 15).
5-9	Minor collision. You've hit something big and hard enough to slow your vehicle down and damage it. Maybe you sideswiped a squad car, ran over a mailbox, or clipped your wing on a barn rafter. For every 10 mph of speed, the vehicle takes 1d6 points

of damage as it hits something. Speed is cut in half on the following round.

10-14 Major collision. You hit something hard enough to stop your vehicle completely. For every 10 mph of speed, the vehicle takes 2d6 points of damage as it hits something. Speed is 0 on the following round.

15+ Fireball. As above, but everything within 20 feet of the vehicle's fuel tank (including the vehicle itself) takes 10d6 points of fire damage as the vehicle explodes (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage). Motorcycles that fireball only deal 5d6 points of fire damage, and large trucks and China clippers deal 15d6 points of fire damage.

Ordinarily, pilots and drivers take standard actions each round to control their vehicle. If you want to take a

move-equivalent action instead (letting you fire a pistol from your motorcycle, for example) you can do so, but your Pilot and Drive checks suffer a -5 competence penalty because you're diverting your attention.

At the beginning of the next round, announce the vehicles' new speeds, adjust the distance between the vehicles, introduce a chase feature, and repeat the process until the chase ends. Chases generally end with a crash or when one vehicle puts enough distance between it and its pursuers. How much distance ends a chase is up to the GM, but a good rule of thumb for ground chases is a three-round gap. If it takes the pursuers three rounds at their current speed to reach the current position of the chase leader, the chase is over. For example, if the pursuers are traveling at a speed of 80 feet per round, you can escape them by building a lead of 250 feet.

Vehicles in Combat

Shooting at vehicles is generally easy: they tend to have low ACs. But an additional modifier applies. Attackers suffer a -2 penalty for every 20 mph a target vehicle is traveling relative to the shooter.

Vehicle Damage: Like other objects, vehicles have wound points and hardness. When a vehicle has lost half or more of its wounds, its speeds are cut in half at every category. Vehicles at 0 wounds can't move and each round have a 75% chance of erupting and being completely destroyed in a fireball (see above).

Massive Vehicle Damage: If a vehicle takes more than 10 points of damage from a single attack, the shock of the damage may make the vehicle difficult to control. The driver or pilot must immediately make a Drive or Pilot check (DC = damage taken). The consequences of a failed check are exactly like a failed attempt to increase speed.

Hitting Things with Your Vehicle: If you ram something with your vehicle, it does 2d6 points of damage for every 10 mph of relative speed you're traveling. Your vehicle takes an equal amount of damage, but your target's remaining wound points is also the maximum damage you can take. For example, if you try to run down a pedestrian with 12 wound points, your car can't take more than 12 points of damage no matter how fast you're going.

Note that the relative speed between ramming vehicle and target is what matters, not the ramming vehicle's actual speed. If you're going 90 mph when you rear-end someone going 70 mph, you'll only deal 4d6 points of damage, not 18d6 points of damage. But if two vehicles going 90 mph collide in a head-on collision, they'll do 36d6 points of damage.

Chase Features

It might be the archetypical fruit cart, or the old lady crossing the street. It might be the fog bank that reduces visibility, or the sudden cloudburst. And it could be the barely-glimpsed alleyway or the beckoning highway on-ramp. It's generally a good idea to introduce a new chase feature at the beginning of every round. Most chases in pulp fiction aren't tests of raw speed so much as they are tests of the competitors' ability to cope with the unexpected.

Ideally, you'll come up with your own chase features for the chases you design for your adventures. Here are some ideas to get you started. Choose or roll on the following table.

Table 7-1: Urban Car Chase Features

1 Heavier Traffic. The terrain shifts to a tougher category (open to typical, typical to restricted, and restricted stays the same). Drivers who try to maintain their current speed probably face tougher Drive check DCs.
2 Lighter Traffic. As above, but the terrain shifts to an easier category, meaning that vehicles can speed up or enjoy easier Drive check DCs.
3 Fruit Cart! Drivers must make an extra Drive check this round to avoid a street vendor. The consequences for failure are as above, except that minor and major collisions only hit the fruit cart. The fruit cart doesn't slow the vehicle down, but it deals 3d6 points of damage to the vehicle and makes a mess of the windshield, causing the driver to suffer a -4 circumstance penalty until it's washed off. You can forego the extra Drive check if you like, although you'll automatically hit the fruit cart if you do.
4 A third party joins the chase. Often this will be the police—or more police if they're already chasing you.
5 Fork in the road. The lead vehicle in the chase is faced with the choice of either keeping the same terrain or changing it. There's a 50% chance of the alternative being tougher or easier terrain. The lead driver makes the choice, using the chosen terrain for that round's Drive check. Subsequent drivers must follow suit to maintain the chase.
6 Short cut. One or more chasing vehicles (choose randomly, and the lead vehicle isn't eligible) sees an alley or other short cut. The short cut is restricted terrain for those who take it, but successfully navigating it for a round will cut the distance to the leader in half.
7 Pedestrians. Drivers must each make 1d3 extra Drive checks this round to weave around the playing children, old ladies, and cute puppies that are in the wrong place at the wrong time. Pedestrians (with 3d6 wound points) deal damage as indicated in Hitting Things with Your Vehicle above, and they don't slow down the ramming vehicle. Heartless drivers can voluntarily forego the extra Drive checks, but they'll automatically mow down the pedestrians.
8 Broken watermain or open fire hydrant. Something has made the road unusually slick here. Drivers suffer a -2 circumstance penalty on Drive checks this round.
9 Split road. A wall, train, or other significant barrier separates the vehicles this round. The chase continues, but the vehicles can't shoot at each other this round.
10 Camouflage. A flock of pigeons, onrush of cars, or other visual clutter makes it hard for the pursuers to keep their eyes on their quarry. Pursuing vehicles need to make a Spot check (DC 15) to maintain the chase.

Spotting Upcoming Chase Features: Generally, everyone finds out about a chase feature at the beginning of a round. But if a character succeeds at a Spot check (DC 15) as a standard action, she can look beyond the immediate environs of the chase and see what the next round's chase feature will be.

Chapter 8
The DISCOVERIES and POWERS of Prof. Prometheus

~By Munro H. Hamilton~

Author of "Prof. Prometheus and the Earthquake Machine"

For scientist and mystic characters, learning things that most people can't imagine is the primary source of their power. With each new level, scientists make discoveries, which they build into their inventions and mystics gain new powers that they can activate by spending power points. This chapter identifies how those discoveries and powers work.

Discoveries

When a scientist character attains a new level, he makes new discoveries. For each discovery, simply choose a spell of the appropriate level from the D&D *Player's Handbook*. Your character has made that discovery and can build it into the inventions he constructs.

For example, at 6th level a scientist makes his first 3rd-level discovery. Paging through the *Player's Handbook*, the player chooses the *lightning bolt* spell. Now the scientist can build inventions that fire bolts of lightning. The scientist doesn't consider it magic or a spell, but mechanically it works just like the D&D spell (5-foot wide or 10-foot wide bolt, 1d6 points of damage per scientist level).

Naming is Mandatory: It's hard to overemphasize that you'll want to rename the discoveries so they have a 20th-century pulp feel, not a heroic high fantasy feel. If you continually refer to your "*Melf's acid arrow*" gun, your game will feel like a strange modern-day D&D. But if you call the discovery "biovore rounds," "corrosium bullets" or "the Kervellian wave-ray," you'll sound like a pulp-era scientist (see Chapter 5 for some naming tips). Using the D&D spells as the basis for discoveries is a matter of convenience—there are more than 100 pages of available discoveries there, and if you play D&D, you're already familiar with how they work.

Note that while all spells in the *Player's Handbook* are potential discoveries for scientists, some are smarter choices than others. For example, *detect evil* is a poor choice in a world where no one has an intrinsic align-

ment. *Invisibility to undead* will be a little-used discovery unless you happen to be playing in a campaign in which such creatures are common.

Powers

Powers are in many ways similar to discoveries, but they can be applied directly. Scientists have to incorporate their discoveries into inventions to get them to work. But mystics can activate powers simply by taking a standard action and spending the required power points (listed with each power). At each new level, mystics gain access to more and better powers. Just keep track of which powers your mystic can activate; as long as you can pay the power point cost, you can activate whatever powers from that list you like.

More Powers and Discoveries

The mystic powers in *Pulp Heroes* are taken (with slight adaptations) from the D&D *Psionics Handbook*. We've presented a selection of 1st-level powers here to get you started, but if you want to find a wider variety of powers for your mystic, the *Psionics Handbook* is the place to look.

In general, powers and discoveries are balanced against each other; a 3rd-level power is about as useful as a 3rd-level discovery. Accordingly, you can treat any of the powers below as discoveries. You could build an "aversion helmet" for example, incorporating the aversion power below.

But don't do the reverse—don't take discoveries (spells) from the D&D *Player's Handbook* and turn them into mystic powers. Because mystics use power points, they can activate an impressive number of low-level powers if they wish. But many of the D&D spells improve based on their caster level (look at *magic missile* and *lightning bolt* for two examples). The mystic becomes too powerful if they can activate powers that improve, because they get much of the punch of a high-level power, but they're only paying low-level cost for it. Such spells are

balanced as discoveries because the scientist's level is built into the formula for creating an invention. But to give such spells to the mystic is unbalancing. Mystics are plenty powerful already in a world where most people don't believe their powers exist.

Attraction

[Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]
Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft.+5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Power Points: 1

You plant a powerful attraction in the mind of the target. The attraction can be a particular person, an object, an action, or an event. The power's subject will take reasonable steps to meet, get close to, attend, find, or perform the object of its implanted attraction. For the purposes of this power, "reasonable" means that while fascinated, the victim doesn't suffer from blind obsession. He won't leap into a fire or over a cliff. He can still recognize danger, but he will not flee unless the threat is immediate. For example, if you made your target feel an attraction for yourself, you couldn't command him indiscriminately (though he will be willing to listen to you, even if he disagrees, granting you a bonus to your Charisma modifier of +4 in regards to the power's subject).

Biocurrent

Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft.+5 ft./2 levels)
Target: Any two living creatures who are no more than 15 ft. apart
Duration: Concentration (up to 1 minute/level) (see text)
Saving Throw: Fort half
Power Points: 1 (see text)

Your body's mystically fueled bioelectric currents produce an arc of blue-white electricity targeting a primary foe for 1d4 points of electrical damage per round you meet the requirements (see below). Electricity also arcs off the primary target to strike one additional foe initially within 15 ft. of the primary foe, or who subsequently moves within 15 ft. of the primary foe while the duration lasts. Secondary foes also take 1d4 points of damage per round the duration lasts. Should either the primary or secondary foe fall to less than 0 vitality points, *biocurrent's* electrical arc randomly retargets another primary and secondary foe while the duration continues. Targeted foes may move or make a save each round for half damage (on that round only), but as long as they remain in range, they continue to be effected.

Biocurrent's round-to-round concentration also requires you to pay 1 power point each additional round to maintain the electrical arc. Moreover, maintaining *biocurrent* is a full round action (you are limited to only 5 foot steps and no other actions). If you take damage from a foe while maintaining *biocurrent* you must make a successful Concentration check. If any of these requirements are not met, the electrical arc winks out.

Charm Person

[Compulsion Mind-Affecting Language-Dependent]
Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft.+5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One person
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Power Points: 1

This power makes a humanoid of Medium-size or smaller regard you as his trusted friend and ally. If the creature is currently being threatened or attacked by you or your allies, however, he receives a +5 bonus on his saving throw.

The power does not enable you to control the charmed person as if he were an automaton, but he perceives your words and actions in the most favorable way. You can try to give the subject orders, but you must win an opposed Charisma check to convince him to do anything he wouldn't ordinarily do. (Retries not allowed.) A charmed person never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, but he might believe you if you assured him that the only chance to save your life is for him to hold back an onrushing Nazi robot for "just a few seconds." Any act by you or your apparent allies that threatens the charmed person breaks the power. Note also that you must speak the person's language to communicate your commands, or else be good at pantomiming.

Concussion

Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft.+10 ft./level)
Targets: 1 target
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude half
Power Points: 1

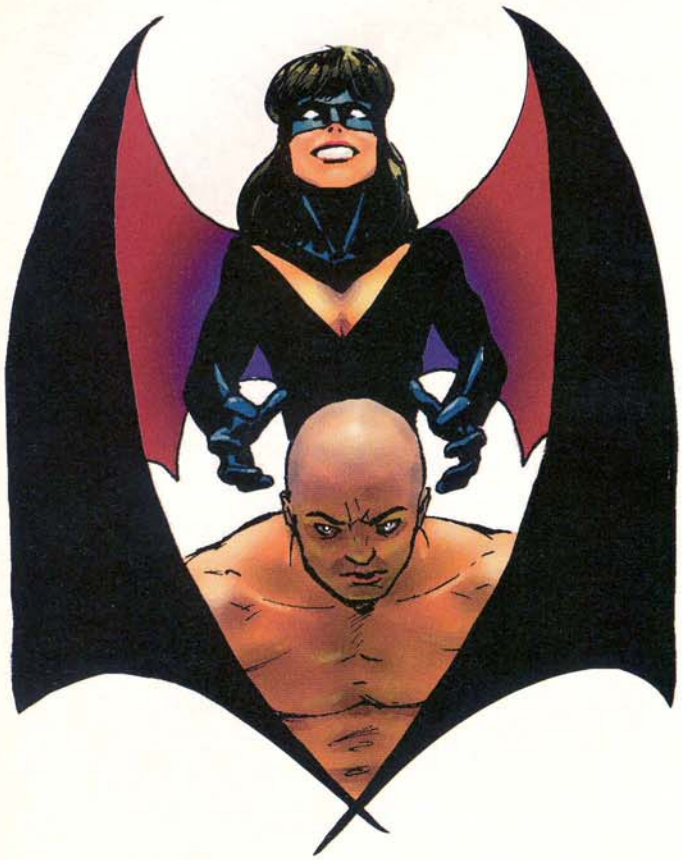
A target you select is pummeled with telekinetic force. *Concussion* deals 1d6 points of damage.

Concussion always affects a target within range that you can see, even if the target is in melee or has partial cover or concealment. Inanimate objects (locks, etc.) cannot be damaged by the power.

Control Object

Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft.+10 ft./level)
Target: A nonmagical, unattended object weighing up to 100 pounds
Duration: Concentration (up to 1 round/level)
Saving Throw: None
Power Points: 1

You telekinetically "bring to life" inanimate objects. Though not actually alive, objects move under your control. The controlled object moves like a puppet. Its movements are jerky and clumsy. If the item is rigid, it makes creaking, groaning, or grating sounds as you control it. The object can move with a Speed of 10. If the object is controlled to attack an opponent, the object has 1 bludgeoning attack with an attack bonus of +0, inflicting 1d4 points of damage. For instance, a chair may walk, a dead



tree shuffles, while a stone waddles. Live vegetation may not be controlled in this fashion.

Note: You may attempt to "control" a normal lock, making it move in such a way as to cause itself to unlock. To open a lock, you make a Constitution check with a +4 bonus vs. the lock's DC. If you fail, your concentration lapses, and you must activate a new *control object* in order to attempt the same lock again.

Empathic Transfer

Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Power Points: 1

You transfer the hurts of others to yourself. When you activate this power, you can transfer up to 8 points of damage, plus an additional 1-8 points of damage (you choose), per manifester levels achieved from the target creature to yourself.

Alternatively, you can absorb one poison or one disease afflicting the target creature into yourself. When you absorb a poison or disease, you do not absorb the damage done previously dealt by the affliction, but you do take up the burden of making the secondary and/or continuing Fortitude saves against the affliction.

Finally, you can choose to absorb up to 4 points of temporary ability damage, plus an addition 1-4 points of temporary ability damage (you choose) per manifester level from the target to yourself.

In most cases, you would only use *empathic transfer* if it was your intent to the cell adjustment power to heal yourself, but healing yourself is not mandatory.

Empathy

[Mind-Affecting]
Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft.+5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One living creature
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates
Power Points: 1

You detect the surface emotions of any creature you can see that is in range. You can sense basic needs, drives, and/or emotions. Thirst, hunger, fear, fatigue, pain, rage, hatred, uncertainty, curiosity, friendliness, etc., can all be sensed.

Lesser Mind Link

Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft.+5 ft./2 levels)
Targets: You and one other creature who is initially no more than 30 ft. away
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Power Points: 1

You forge a telepathic bond with another creature who must have an Intelligence score of 6 or higher. The bond can be established only with a willing subject, who therefore receives no saving throw or power resistance. You can communicate telepathically through the bond regardless of the absence of a common language. No special power or influence is established as a result of the bond. Once the bond is formed, it works over any distance.

Matter Agitation

Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft.+5 ft./2 levels)
Area: 2 square feet of surface area of an object or creature
Duration: Concentration (up to 2 rounds/level)
Saving Throw: None
Power Points: 1

You can excite the molecules of a nonmagical object, heating it to the point of combustion over time. If you shift your focus to another object, the first object cools and the 2nd object begins to heat up.

1st round: Readily flammable materials (paper, dry grass, tinder, torches) ignite. Skin reddens (1 point of damage).

2nd round: Wood smolders and smokes, metal becomes hot to the touch, skin blisters (1d4 points of damage), hair smolders, paint shrivels, water boils.

3rd round: Wood ignites, metal scorches (1d4 points of damage for those holding metallic objects). Skin burns and hair ignites (1d6 points), lead melts.

You can continue to agitate a chosen surface area up to the duration of the power if concentration holds, but

you can only do a maximum of 1d6 points of damage against a living target.

Object Reading
Level: 1
Activation Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: One object
Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes/level (D)
Saving Throw: None
Power Points: 1

You can learn details of an inanimate object's previous owner. Objects accumulate psychic impressions left by their previous owners, which can be read by use of this power. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular object.

1st round: Last owner's species.
2nd round: Last owner's sex.
3rd round: Last owner's age.
4th round: Last owner's state of mind when last touched.
5th round: How last owner gained and lost the object.
6th round: Owner previous-to-last's species,
7th+ rounds: etc.

An object without any previous owners reveals no information. You can continue to run down the list of previous owners and learn details about them as long as the power's duration lasts. If you Read the same object again, you do not pick up where you left off in the list of previous owners.

Sale Only $5.75

Double Action Revolver, made from finest materials. All parts drop forged. .22 32 or 38 cal. Send only $1 with order. Play expressman balance plus express charges. Order today.
Wineholt Mail Order, Box 88, Woodbine, Pa.

TRICKS WITH ELECTRICITY

Make electric lights obey voice, make things spin, jump, kick, run, vibrate, buzz, shoot, shock, flash, mystify—all by electricity. Make window novelties, floating rings, spirit rapping, all kinds amusing and practical devices. Book tells how to do 200 stunts with 110 volts. A. C. Postpaid $1.00
CUTTING & SONS, 112-B, ST., CAMPBELL, CALIF.

Be a COBALT-RAY Technician
LEARN AT HOME – MAKE GOOD MONEY

Cobalt-ray transducers are the wave of the future. Do not let the opportunity to develop new job skills and make a fine living while doing so pass you by as it has countless others. From our island laboratory in the South China Seas, we will train you to be become the best cobalt-ray transducer operator. Earn $20, $30, $40 dollars a week in this exciting field. Write today for FREE booklet.

D. F. Trenton, President, Dept CRT
National Cobalt-Ray Technology Institute, New Brunswick, N.J.
Send me your 64-page book FREE. No salesman will call.
(Please write or print plainly.) AGE .....
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... STATE .....

STICK'EM'UP!

Regardless of strength or size, defend yourself and friends against any foul attack, from bullies or by gun, knife or club. Subdue with ease persons much stronger than yourself. A complete course on approved mystic martial arts by internationally known daring playboy. 151 illustrations with detailed instructions pocket size. 13 knockout blows without using fists. Peer into the minds of evildoers. Send One Dollar Full Price, or will send C.O.D.
L. CRANSTON
1422 River Wharf New York, NY.

THRILLS!

GREENWAY, a bridge expert, Dr. Francis, Carmela and Reverdy are playing bridge. A hand is dealt . . . the bidding starts . . . a shot rings out . . . Greenway is dead! A bid was the signal for the murder to be done! Read "Death Plays Bridge."

In the February
Complete Detective Novel Magazine
20¢ at All Newsstands

In the Next EXCITING ISSUE of PULP HEROES!

In March, *Pulp Heroes* provides a shocking exposé of low deeds and high science in the city of Northport. In 60 short days, discover the city of a thousand secrets! (10¢ at all Quality Newsstands)

Rules You Can Use!

Arcana: Societies of Magic

Available November 2001

Sorcerers and wizards are not the only practitioners of the magical arts. Esoteric orders of arcane initiates push the boundaries of magic beyond the limits of tomes and blood. The Abbey of Green Steel trains monks that pack a magical punch, the Servants of Decay subvert civilization with dark rites, and The School Behind the Veil teaches warriors to use divination to best their opponents. **Arcana: Societies of Magic** details six different organizations that employ unique styles of magic to achieve their ends. The description of each society includes information of the group's history, goals, hierarchy, and leaders, as well as a map of its headquarters. New skills, feats, spells and prestige classes make it a complete package. Like Green Ronin's award-winning Freeport series, **Arcana: Societies of Magic** can be used in any fantasy campaign.

Freeport: The City of Adventure

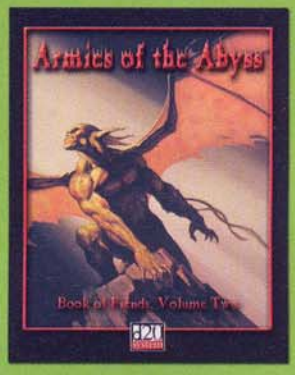
Available December 2001

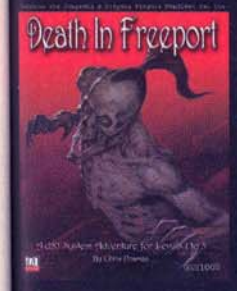
Players and gamemasters alike have been begging for more info on Freeport. The wait ends in December when **Freeport: The City of Adventure** (formerly known as **Secrets of Freeport**) blows the lid off the most larcenous city in fantasy. Game industry veterans Matt Forbeck and Hal Mangold join Freeport creator Chris Pramas for an in-depth look at the people, places, and politics of the city of adventure. Jam packed with info on the city, the Serpent's Teeth, and the sea lanes, **Freeport: The City of Adventure** provides action-packed material for any campaign. The book also includes a full color poster map of the city, beautifully rendered with street-level detail. **Freeport: The City of Adventure** is the must-have sourcebook of 2001!

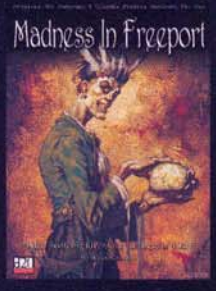
Armies of the Abyss: Book of Fiends, Volume 2

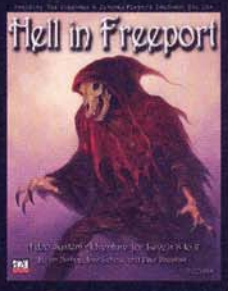
Available January 2002

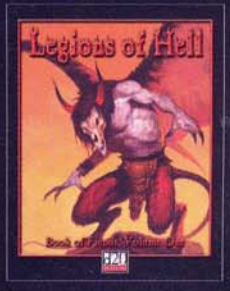
Green Ronin took you to the Pit in **Legions of Hell**, giving devils their due. Now its time to take a tour of the Abyss and get an up close and personal look at the masters of chaos, the demons. An endless variety of demons populate the infinity of the Abyss, and volume 2 of the **Book of Fiends** gives you the lowdown on more than 50 of the vilest outsiders the multiverse has to offer. 3E concept artist Sam Wood leads an all-star assemblage of artistic talent in bringing these beasts to life and complete d20 stats round out the package. **Armies of the Abyss** are on the march!

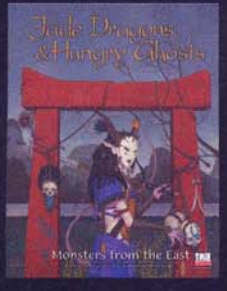












Green Ronin Publishing... d20 Rules Done Right!

Green Ronin Publishing P.O. Box 1723 Renton, WA 98057-1723
For free product enhancements, check us out on the web at www.greenronin.com.